Modernizing the Federal Statistical System:

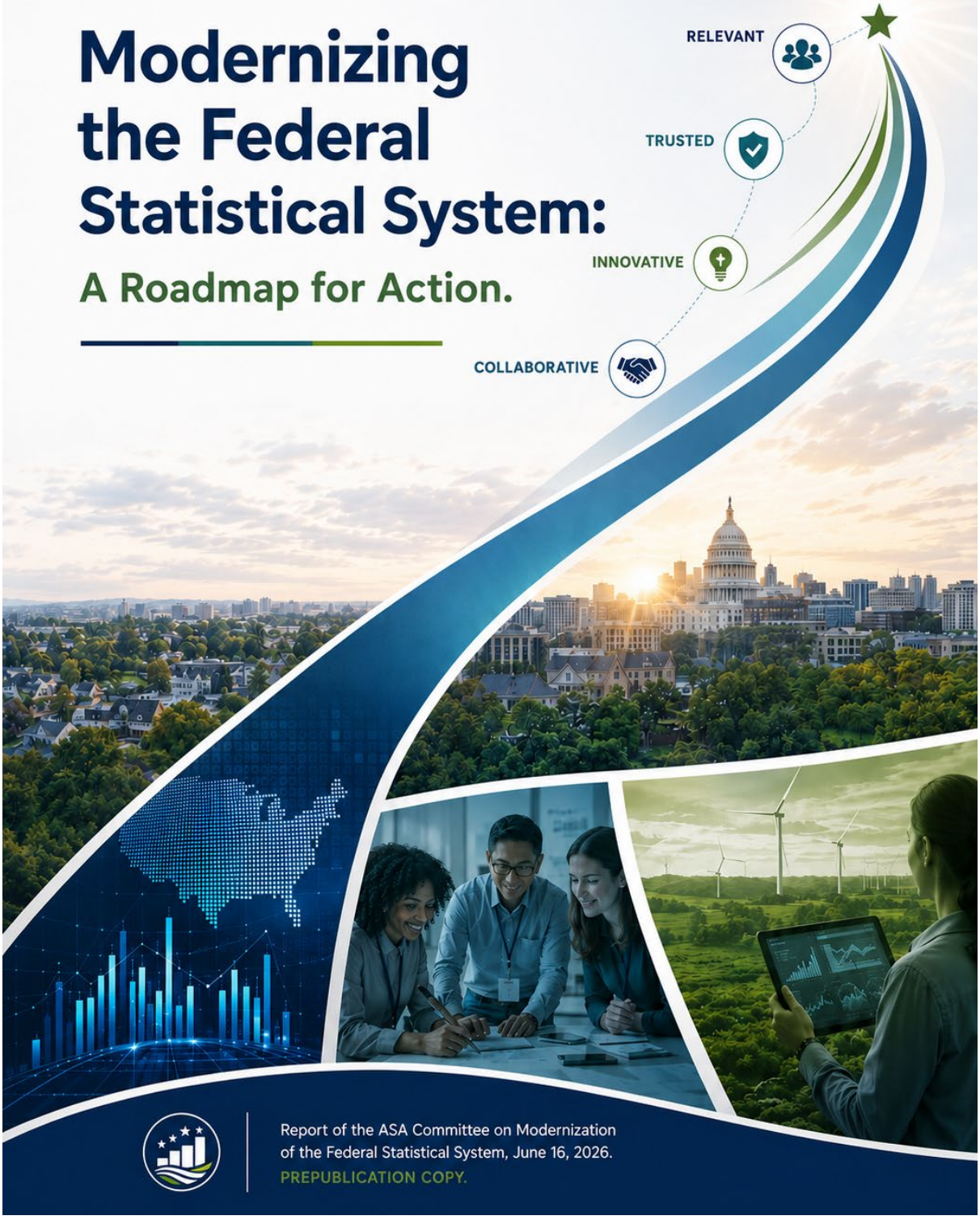
A Roadmap for Action.

RELEVANT

TRUSTED

INNOVATIVE

COLLABORATIVE



Report of the ASA Committee on Modernization of the Federal Statistical System, June 16, 2026.

PREPUBLICATION COPY.

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The findings and recommendations presented in this report are those of the authors alone and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the American Statistical Association nor views of any host organization of the project team members.

We thank the many people who attended working meetings to inform this report and who reviewed report drafts for their guidance, critique, and support.[1] We are also grateful for the expert editing of the report by Kerri Kennedy.

We dedicate this report to the current and former employees and leaders of the federal statistical system. We are appreciative of their service and commitment to producing trusted, useful statistics with scientific rigor and integrity.

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[1] Please see https://www.amstat.org/policy-and-advocacy/modernizing-the-federal-statistical-system/ for meeting participants' and reviewers' names.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Official statistics from the federal government are the lifeblood of the nation's economy, society, and polity. Trustworthy statistics are critical to public understanding and to informed decisions by federal, state, and local policymakers, the business community, financial markets, nonprofits, and households. Without the gold-standard data federal statistical agencies provide in numerous domains, we fly blind, individually and collectively.

Imagine the benefits of weekly or on-demand, hyperlocal, demographic-, occupation- or industry-specific, trusted measures of social well-being and economic activity. These are possible. New technologies have created important opportunities for national statistics that are more relevant, accurate, granular, high-frequency, and credible, and produced more efficiently and securely. Yet our statistical agencies are currently hard pressed to fulfill their existing missions, let alone respond to emerging opportunities and needs.

To meet this moment, the statistical agencies must collectively overcome not only external challenges, such as declining response rates to surveys, but also internal challenges. These include uncertain annual budgets, complex hiring processes, and regulatory and administrative barriers to acquiring and using administrative and private-sector data in ways that could help statistical programs be more useful and cost-effective while protecting privacy and confidentiality.

This project of the American Statistical Association (ASA) was organized to develop actionable recommendations to ensure trust in federal statistics and statistical agencies, modernize the federal statistical system (FSS), and boost innovation. We find that the technical means to achieve success exist. Furthermore, the data user and producer communities broadly support needed change. This roadmap charts the steps necessary.[2] The current moment provides an opportunity for bold action to deliver the federal statistical system the nation requires. ***We urge the Administration and Congress to seize this opportunity.***

Why Bold Action Is Needed

The United States built federal statistics into its DNA from the outset, mandating in its Constitution a census every 10 years for reapportioning seats in the House of Representatives. Over time, the country developed an extensive but highly decentralized statistical system, creating new statistical agencies as policy issues rose to the federal level, beginning with offices to produce statistics on trade, agriculture, education, and labor in the 19th century, followed by statistical offices for income, social security, science and engineering, health, energy, criminal justice, and transportation in the 20th century. A statistical policy coordination unit was established in the Budget Bureau (now the Office of Management and Budget, OMB) in the 1930s. Statistical agencies then achieved major innovations in the 20th century: shifting the primary data collection method from costly censuses to much less expensive and more nimble probability sample surveys, becoming first adopters of mainframe computers for speedier data

[2] A policymaker precis is forthcoming.

processing and dissemination of computer products, and pioneering approaches to protect confidentiality in publicly available data products.

The 21st century has seen declines in survey response rates, declining statistical agency budgets in real terms, and new challenges to maintaining confidentiality and privacy from the advent of the internet. At the same time a myriad of data sources (administrative records, private-sector data, internet data) are potentially available for blending with federal survey data to improve the relevance, accuracy, timeliness, and granularity of important data series. To respond to these challenges and opportunities, the 2018 Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking (Evidence) Act strengthened cross-agency coordination and data-sharing for exclusively statistical purposes, building on earlier legislation providing strong confidentiality protection for statistical data.

In contrast to many other countries, however, the FSS remains highly decentralized, and this fact has exacerbated its challenges. Each of the many statistical agencies and programs confronts legal and administrative barriers to blending data, constrained resources, and heightened concerns about privacy, which could undercut credibility. Priorities are not set in a coordinated, system-wide manner. Agencies differ widely in budget and staffing levels, and there are no system-wide appropriations or mechanisms for system-wide innovation. Consequently, agencies vary in their ability to update methods, IT capabilities, and data access and dissemination tools. Estimates for similar phenomena (e.g., household income, health, industry employment, insurance coverage) may differ without adequate guidance for users; there are also gaps in available data. Although the separate agencies depend in many ways on each other's data inputs (e.g., population denominators from the Census Bureau and administrative records from Statistics of Income), funding shortfalls and administrative issues impede the ready interchange of data among statistical agencies as well as from program agencies to statistical agencies. The lack of adequate resources impedes the ability of the chief statistician's office in OMB to identify statistical programs that should not be altered without taking account of the other agencies that depend on the data or to play a stronger role in setting system-wide priorities, especially for innovation.

The agencies' challenges combine to impede their ability to:

- Respond quickly to rapidly evolving data needs (e.g., for multifaceted information on the effects of AI on the economy and society or high-frequency economic measures for decision-making in turbulent world conditions);
- Improve long-running data series (e.g., unemployment, healthcare, educational achievement) in a timely manner;
- Adopt improved methods and technology; and
- Manage their resources efficiently from the perspective of the system as a whole.

The very expert and dedicated federal statistical staff are moving forward on many fronts but—speaking metaphorically—often operate with one hand tied behind their backs.

A Way Forward: The Roadmap

Congress and the administration need to enable the FSS to modernize processing and dissemination systems to accommodate rapidly evolving data needs and increase value to policymakers and the public. Barriers to full implementation of the blended data paradigm, which is essential to bolster data quality and utility, must be addressed. Speaking in management terms, the statistical agencies need to become interoperable, functionally unified, and adaptive, all the while maintaining public trust.

Change at the needed scale will require many people to take action, and for that to occur, they need a roadmap. To spur progress, this report identifies feasible actions in **three stages**[3] designed to maximize impact while allowing for continual assessment of progress to ensure value:

- **Interoperable:** At this stage, statistical agencies' operational systems would be sufficiently compatible to allow appropriate system-wide access and linking of data sources and sharing of operational services (e.g., IT) where desirable. Data subjects could feel confident that such interoperability is occurring under strong privacy laws and practices, consistently applied, including transformative privacy-enhancing techniques (PETs) and legal stipulations that federal statistics are to be used only for statistical purposes (e.g., tables of relevant population characteristics) and not for enforcement or administrative actions. In addition, data products would be harmonized where needed, and data documentation and access tools would be standardized system-wide to the benefit of policymakers and the public.
- **Unified:**[4] At this stage, statistical agencies' operational systems would be highly compatible to allow system-wide prioritization, planning, and investments coordinated by an invigorated and adequately resourced chief statistician's office and Interagency Council on Statistical Policy (ICSP).
- **Adaptive:** At this stage, statistical agencies would have highly automated, resilient, and agile operational and research systems. These systems would be highly compatible and statistical agency staff cross-trained so that the federal statistical system *as a whole* could routinely address established statistical product needs, anticipate emerging needs, and proactively incorporate new data sources. All the while, the FSS would continue to lead in practices and techniques that implement fair information practice principles (FIPPs) used by governments around the world to respect people's privacy, such as collecting only information that is needed for producing statistics and protecting that information appropriately (DVA 2023).

By the Adaptive Stage, statistical agencies would operate, in effect, as if they were an integrated system to seamlessly serve policymakers and the public. Specialized expertise and relationships would continue to characterize agencies focused on particular topics, such as health or criminal justice, but all agencies and data users would benefit from the ability of the

[3] These stages take into account the project team's characterization of the historical evolution of the FSS through innovation (Section 4) within a broader context of capacity development (see Section 5).

[4] We use "unified system" to denote an FSS that, while continuing to be composed of separate agencies and programs, acts in many ways as if it were part of a central statistical agency. One can think of a unified system as a functionally integrated FSS, in contrast to requiring an administratively integrated FSS.

system as a whole to add value by relating data across areas and using the most up-to-date methods, IT systems, privacy protections, and other elements of data production and dissemination. The FSS would maintain trust with policymakers and the public by providing high-quality data with strong guardrails precluding use against individuals or organizations for administrative or legal proceedings.

Recommended Actions

The project team makes 30 recommendations, summarized below, to move the FSS to the Adaptive Stage (see Box S-1 for concrete examples of the benefits that can be expected). Some recommendations can be accomplished without new legislation and within a short time frame; others will require a longer implementation time (see Tables 6-1 to 6-7).

- **Launch the modernization project** immediately through executive and congressional action and closely monitor progress by leveraging existing performance measurement expertise at OMB, newly legislated audit requirements of federal statistical agencies, and directed evaluations by the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) (recommendations 1 and 2).
- **Move to the Interoperable Stage:**
    - **Enable extensive use of new collection, analytical, and data protection processes** through public–private research partnerships to support such improvements as higher-frequency data, in turn facilitated by AI-assisted data ingestion, linkage, estimation, and documentation tools, and greater use of PETs (recommendations 3 through 7).
    - **Achieve a well-functioning data infrastructure** through improving privacy-protected state, federal, and private-sector data-sharing with federal statistical agencies in secure environments (recommendations 8 through 13).
    - **Improve accountability to data users and providers** by safeguarding trust (recommendations 14 through 16).
    - **Improve data usefulness**, for example, by making products and access tools more comparable across agencies (recommendations 17 through 21).
- **Move to the Unified Stage** and **enter the Adaptive Stage:**
    - **Improve coordination of statistical program planning, budgeting, and operations,** which will mean additional resources and authority for the chief statistician's office and the Interagency Council on Statistical Policy (recommendations 22 through 26).
    - **Motivate innovation** through an FSS innovation fund with multiyear funding flexibility (recommendations 27 and 28).
    - **Enhance system-wide branding** of the statistical agencies and their data products (recommendations 29 and 30).

Assessing Progress

To keep on task—namely, to achieve and maintain an adaptive and resilient FSS able to efficiently produce credible and innovative statistics that respond to user needs and protect

privacy and confidentiality—progress must be assessed and shortcomings addressed promptly. For this reason, recommendation 2 urges Congress to support, enable, and address the administration's progress on FSS modernization. Existing performance measurement expertise and newly legislated auditing of federal statistical agency functioning (under the Trust Regulation) as well as directed GAO studies are well suited to assess whether the recommended actions have yielded sufficient benefit.

Box S-1. Concrete Benefits of Modernizing the Federal Statistical System

Interoperable Stage: *A shared up-to-date business address list improves accuracy and efficiency of collecting data on payroll employment, commercial energy consumption, farm operations, and other statistics.* At present, data-sharing restrictions force statistical agencies to have their own business lists, each with strengths and weaknesses and discrepancies in coverage, such as the Census County Business Patterns and the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages. Reducing classification and sampling differences would improve efficiency and facilitate combining data from different agencies. FSS agencies could also avoid making duplicative requests for data from businesses, reducing burden and stabilizing response rates.

Unified Stage: *Innovation moves forward expeditiously through an FSS innovation fund with multi-year budgeting flexibility.* At present, agencies' disparate levels and limitations of funding mean that needed improvements to key surveys can take a decade or more to complete. Some multi-agency projects have received only partial funding, such as the Supplemental Poverty Measure, which has funding for Census and not for BLS. Some multi-year projects, such as a new cohort for the National Longitudinal Survey, have been funded for only one year. Multi-year funding to enable electronic health records to replace much of the costly infrastructure of the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) could make it even more valuable for public health (e.g., NHANES findings on lead levels in children's blood led to policies to reduce lead in gasoline, soft drink cans, food, and water).

Adaptive Stage: *FSS agencies work in concert to keep up-to-date with methods and systems and have well-functioning, cross-agency mechanisms to set priorities to meet user needs.* Innovations like the Household Pulse Survey and the Small Business Pulse Survey, which many statistical agencies worked together to implement rapidly during the Covid-19 pandemic, could be the norm.

Possible Role of Consolidation

What if progress toward an adaptive and resilient FSS falls considerably short of what the nation requires? In particular, what if the new coordinating authorities assigned to the chief statistician's office and the ICSP prove unworkable or inadequate? Organizational consolidation may not be necessary, and it carries risks. However, consolidation may be beneficial and essential if progress has been made toward aligned vision, standards, and data, but cross-agency regulatory, legal, or appropriations barriers to further progress or maintaining integrity prove insurmountable. In that case, we believe that consolidating the statistical agencies into a national statistical office led by the chief statistician is likely the best solution.

Conclusion

The project's recommended roadmap provides a clear set of actions for modernizing the FSS. By concentrating first on interoperability, the FSS can accelerate progress toward a functionally unified and adaptive system. This approach balances ambition with practicality, emphasizing sustained evaluation, near-term wins, and long-term resilience to ensure federal statistics remain credible, efficient, and relevant in a rapidly changing environment and that the FSS maintains the trust of policymakers and the public.

1: PURPOSE OF THE MODERNIZATION PROJECT

The goal of this project is to empower the federal statistical system (FSS) to meet policymakers' and the public's needs for trusted and more cost-effective, relevant, timely, and granular statistics—such as weekly measures of economic activity and population—and geographic area-specific measures of social well-being. The project's focus is to achieve these benefits by reducing barriers that currently hold back the pace of FSS innovation and modernization.

The project team believes that without significant reform, including enhancing the coordination and priority-setting role of the chief statistician's office in the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Interagency Council on Statistical Policy (ICSP), the federal statistical system risks being overwhelmed by its long-standing and immediate problems.

This paper lays out a vision and a roadmap for a modernized FSS, which would remain structurally decentralized but operate as if it were, in effect, an integrated system.[5] A functionally integrated system would set system-wide priorities, ensure that all constituent agencies have up-to-date tools and processes, share IT and other resources where appropriate, and provide transparent system-wide data access to policymakers and the public.

The vision and the roadmap draw on the experience of the team, which includes people with long service in high positions in the federal statistical system, input from three meetings prior to having a draft of the Roadmap available and a fourth meeting to comment on a draft,[6] individual sessions with knowledgeable people, and the work of other groups to reimagine how federal data assets can be made more valuable to policymakers, the public, businesses, and communities. (See, e.g., Commission on Evidence-based Policymaking (CEP) 2017; National Academies 2017a, 2017b, 2023a, 2023b.)[7]

[5] See Appendix 1 for the current structure of the FSS as of March 2025, which includes 13 principal federal statistical agencies, the chief statistician's office in OMB, and 100 statistical programs in other agencies. The 13 principal federal statistical agencies are: Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA); Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS); Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS); Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS); Census Bureau; Economic Research Service (ERS) in the Department of Agriculture; Energy Information Administration (EIA); National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS); National Center for Education Statistics (NCES); National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS); National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES); Office of Research, Evaluation, and Statistics (ORES) in the Social Security Administration (SSA); and Statistics of Income (SOI) in the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

[6] See Appendix 2.

[7] Modernization documents were created by the project; see "Sources Consulted." See also Appendix 2 for summary.

The roadmap does not and cannot answer all questions about implementation, but its staged approach and 30 recommendations are designed to lead to a more cost-effective FSS in a reasonably short time frame. Inevitably, there will be issues that require effort to work out. It may also turn out that functional integration is impossible or does not enable full modernization and interoperability of the FSS. In that case, we believe that structural (i.e., administrative) consolidation of statistical agencies is essential. The goals are too important to leave the modernization task partly completed.

2: A CRITICAL NATIONAL ASSET UNDER STRAIN

Official statistics are the backbone of the nation's data infrastructure—as essential as well-designed and maintained roads, bridges, tracks, and airports are for transportation—and their quality and utility matter immensely for the nation (ASA 2024:1-4, Supporting Materials: A; OMB 2024:82453–5; National Academies 2025: chap. 2).

Many federal and state statutes require federal statistics for allocating billions of dollars to states and localities and making grants for vital programs for the nation. The Congressional Budget Office uses federal statistics as inputs to "score" a bill's likely effects on future budgets, the economy, and the target population. Media reports of federal statistics inform the public and policymakers about the economy (inflation, unemployment); economic well-being (income and poverty); social well-being (public safety, education, health); and many other topics. Businesses; the financial markets; federal, state, and local agencies; nongovernmental organizations (NGOs); and professionals in politics rely on federal statistics for planning and decision-making, and academic researchers mine federal statistics for important insights. A business sector exists that repackages and enhances federal statistics for clients. The U.S. Census is written into the Constitution as the basis for reapportioning the House of Representatives every 10 years, and court decisions requiring districts to be equal in population in turn virtually require census data for redistricting.[8]

U.S. federal statistics are respected worldwide, and U.S. statisticians have played important roles in developing internationally comparable statistical standards and frameworks and assisting other countries' statistical offices. U.S. statistical agencies, however, are increasingly hard-pressed to fulfill their existing missions, let alone respond to emerging trends, including the advent of artificial intelligence (AI). The factors buffeting these agencies and threatening to undermine the accuracy, timeliness, granularity, credibility, and relevance of their data are internal and external to the federal government (ASA 2024:23–9; ASA 2025a:14–6; Modernization document 3.).

External Pressures

Broad-based external trends that jeopardize continued production of high-quality federal statistics include:

[8] American Statistical Association Project to Assess and Monitor the Health of the Federal Statistical Agencies. 2026. *Resources: Values and Uses of Federal Statistics.* https://www.amstat.org/docs/default-source/amstat-documents/pol-resources---value-and-uses-of-federal-statistics%20.pdf.

- The inexorable decline in the willingness of people and businesses to respond to surveys from the government (or anyone else),[9] which argues for a blended data approach to reduce respondent burden and improve the relevance, accuracy, and granularity of many statistical products (e.g., see Box 2-1) (National Academies 2023b:29-31; ASA 2024:58–9, Supporting Materials G.).

- Burgeoning digitized information, which offers new opportunities for improvements to federal statistics (as in blended data) but may also be concerning for policymakers and the public when the information is not on point or is biased or of low quality (National Academies 2023b:190–2.).

- Heightened concerns about privacy and confidentiality, given the vast amounts of nonstatistical digital information about people and organizations readily available to those who would seek to violate privacy, which in turn may undercut trust that information provided to statistical agencies is secure[10] (OMB 2014b: Responsibility No. 4; OMB 2015a: 2; CEP 2017: chap. 3; U.S. Congress 2019: Title III, 5529–36; FCSM 2020: chap.3; OMB 2024: §1321.8; National Academies 2025:32–41; GAO 2025:12–23; Modernization document 3.).

These three trends all involve trust in official statistics, which we stress is multifaceted and mission-critical.[11] Policymakers and the public must trust in the statistics' accuracy and objectivity; otherwise, they will not use them in decision-making and for other purposes. Members of the public, businesses, and other data providers must trust that the information they provide to the government for statistical purposes will be kept confidential, used for appropriate purposes only, and presented only in ways (e.g., statistical tables and estimates) that can never be used against them in administrative or enforcement proceedings. They must also trust that statistical agencies will use approaches that maximize relevance and accuracy, reduce response burden and duplication, and use taxpayers' dollars efficiently. If trust is lacking, the statistical agencies will be unable to collect the accurate, representative data they need to produce useful statistics.

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[9] As just one example, response rates to the Consumer Expenditure Survey interview have fallen from about 85% in the mid-1980s to 50% or less today (ASA 2024: Figure 7).

[10] Concerns about digital threats to privacy date back to the advent of mainframe computers in the 1960s and 1970s; see HEW (U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare) 1973:xxix, 4; HEW 1977: chaps. 1, 15. HEW 1973: chaps. IV-VI, promulgated the first Fair Information Practice Principles (FIPPs) for administrative and statistical and research data systems; see DVA (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs) 2023 for a fact sheet on FIPPs today and the Federal Privacy Council (2022) for a video on FIPPS https://vimeo.com/669614456?cjdata=MXxOfDB8WXww&utm_campaign=5250933&utm_source=affiliate&utm_channel=affiliate&cjevent=9a4819e53e7c11f1801d002a0a82b82d&clickid=9a4819e53e7c11f1801d002a0a82b82d.

[11] As an example of the importance of trust, Bloom et al. (2026) find that presidential claims of "rigged" economic data were associated with a marked spike in the daily news-based Economic Policy Uncertainty Index (EPU) for the US. The EPU was introduced in Baker et al. (2016) to measure uncertainty about who makes economic policy decisions; what actions will be taken; the effect of those actions (past, present, or future); policy inaction; as well as policy developments that are motivated by noneconomic causes of uncertainty, such as national security. The data source for the U.S. EPU is a broad set of U.S. newspapers. The index is calculated by counting the number of articles published each day that contain terms related to economic policy uncertainty (see above) normalized by the total number of articles in the database. From these papers, a normalized index of the volume of news articles discussing economic policy uncertainty is created. This spike implies that preserving trust in the integrity and quality erosion of BLS economic statistics generates economic benefits of about $25 for every $1 spent on the agency's budget.

Internal Vulnerabilities

Inefficiencies and vulnerabilities internal to the federal statistical agencies include:

- A siloed structure and huge differences in size and resources among the statistical agencies that make it hard to achieve interoperability of data systems and products and economies of scale in IT services, training, expertise, and more. These factors particularly disadvantage the smaller agencies. (See Appendix 1 on the complex structure of the FSS; see also FCSM 2020: chap. 3; ASA 2024:71; GAO 2025:42–6; Modernization document 3.)
- Flat or declining inflation-adjusted budgets over the past 15 years for federal statistical agencies and, more recently, substantial loss of staff resulting in numerous planned innovation and modernization activities having to be postponed or stretched out (ASA 2025b:16–9).
- Legal and administrative barriers that make it difficult to acquire, link, and otherwise blend multiple data sources (surveys, administrative records, private-sector data)—suitably protected against hacking and confidentiality breaches—to improve the relevance, accuracy, frequency, and granularity of important data series (CEP 2017: chap.2; Advisory Committee on Data for Evidence Building (ACDEB) 2022:39; ASA 2024:69–70; National Academies 2024:69–70; GAO 2025:35–7; Modernization document 3.).
- Lack of authority and mechanisms to develop durable, mutually beneficial, public-private partnerships with data governance systems to support long-term reliable statistical products.
- Barriers to timely completion and utilization of state-of-the-art IT upgrades and modernization, particularly for statistical agencies with small budgets, which invariably means differing solutions that impede system compatibility across agencies (ASA 2024:71; Modernization document 3.).
- Lack of resources and stature for the Chief Statistician's office in the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA) in OMB[12] (CEP 2017:96–7; ASA 2024:71; Modernization document 3.).
- Lower priority accorded to the statistical system by the administration and Congress, especially to resources for modernization and even for continuing current operations (ASA 2025b: section 5.).
- Heightened concern about the potential for misusing FSS data for nonstatistical purposes, such as legal proceedings, or that FSS data might be affected by undue political interference (ASA 2025b:23–4; Modernization document 3.).

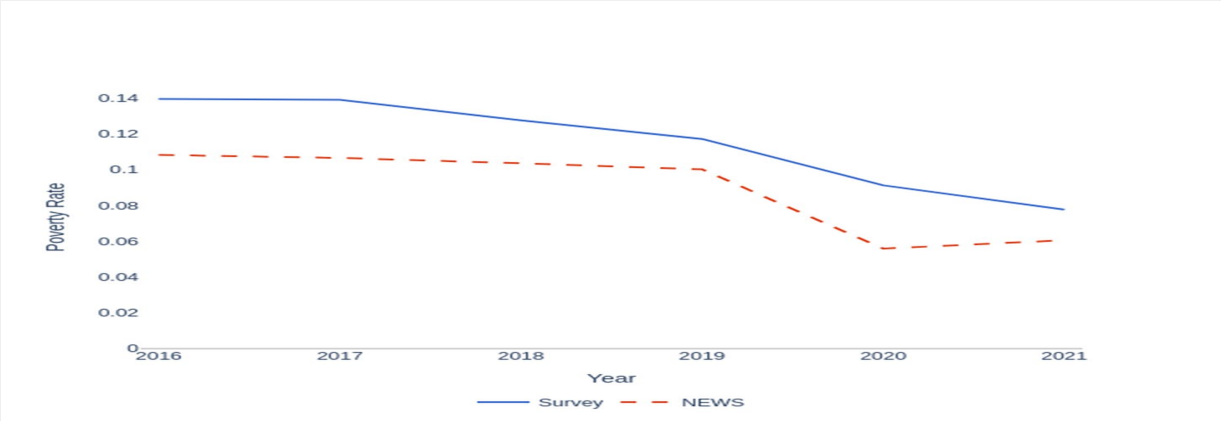
[12] In July 2025, the administration named a political appointee as chief statistician—someone who already held a high-level position in OMB; in January 2026, the administration similarly named an OMB political official to be chief statistician, consequent to the first appointee leaving the government. It is not clear what difference this will make to the FSS coordinating function in OMB.

Box 2-1. National Experimental Well-Being Statistics (NEWS) – Blended Data in Action

NEWS is a recently initiated, ongoing Census Bureau project to provide high-quality distributions of household income and poverty, using carefully edited administrative records to correct for nonresponse and underreporting of income in the Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement (CPS ASEC). These kinds of errors have been increasing for decades (see Citro 2025). At present, over 40% of income in the CPS ASEC is imputed because respondents said they received an income source but did not provide an amount. Moreover, comparisons with independent sources indicate that nonreporting of both receipt and income amounts contributes to underestimates of many types of income in the survey. To be fully realized, the NEWS project needs greater access by the Census Bureau to federal tax return data (such access was approved in late 2024 but not yet implemented) and to state administrative records. With additional resources, NEWS could make faster progress toward the goal of releasing production estimates of pre- and post-tax-and-transfer income and poverty for households every fall for the preceding calendar year.

The first NEWS money income and poverty estimates for 2018 (released in 2023) show an increase of $4,000 or 6 percentage points in household median income, mainly due to the use of administrative records for retirement and investment income for the elderly (Bee, et al. 2023, Table 16). A release in January 2025 added estimates for post-tax-and-transfer income and poverty, with improved handling of missing data and nonresponse bias and improved modeling of earnings taking account of errors in both survey and administrative data. The latest release in July 2025 added estimates for 2016–2021. Future plans include producing timely estimates for the previous year, revising them as needed as more data become available, and working with the American Community Survey (ACS) to develop improved income and poverty estimates for states and localities. (See National Experimental Well-Being Statistics (NEWS) Version 1.) Figure 2-1 below illustrates the impact on the Supplemental Poverty Measure of the more complete NEWS income data compared to the CPS ASEC—namely, lower estimates of poverty.

Figure 2-1. Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM) Rates, 2016–2021, with the CPS ASEC Survey Data and the Augmented NEWS Data



SOURCE: https://www.census.gov/data/experimental-data-products/national-experimental-wellbeing-statistics.html

3: A SHARED VISION FOR A MODERN FEDERAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM

Our strategy is based on a vision for the future of the federal statistical system and a set of capabilities needed to realize the vision, informed from our meetings with stakeholders, agency leadership, and contributions from other projects in this space. Despite broad agreement, prior efforts to achieve some or all of the capabilities required to attain the vision have fallen short, including proposals to combine one or more statistical agencies (ASA 2024: Supporting Materials: C; Modernization documents 1, 2, 3.). Taking this history into account, we propose a roadmap for modernizing the FSS, which envisions progress in incremental stages toward an FSS in which agencies continue to be dispersed throughout the government but act like a well-run integrated system. Equally important, we propose a mechanism to evaluate progress, recommend course corrections, and prod all parties to move forward.[13]

Vision

A major reform effort must start with a vision for the future. According to current agency leaders (National Academies 2023a:65–72)[14] and experts at our three stakeholder meetings, a successful reform effort would improve on the current federal statistical system's ability to:

- Produce more timely, relevant, and accessible statistics to inform critical decisions in both the public and private sectors (U.S. Congress 2019: Title III, 5529–36; OMB 2024: § 1321.5, § 1321.6; GAO 2025:32–35; Modernization documents 2, 3, 4.);
- Realize potential efficiencies from cross-agency initiatives that reduce duplication and burden on respondents and other data providers, while raising cost-effectiveness (OMB 2015b); and
- Take measures to ensure that the public trusts official statistics and that the statistical system is able to protect confidential data assets (HEW 1973:xxix, 4; HEW 1977: chap. 1, 15; U.S. Congress 2019: Title III 5529–36; FCSM 2020:26, 27, 41, 44; ACDEB 2022:39–42, 84; DVA 2023; OMB 2024:§ 1321.8; GAO 2025:24–30; National Academies 2025:27; Modernization documents 2, 3, 4.).

Capabilities

We also heard broad agreement (Modernization documents 2, 3, 4) about the expanded capabilities a modern FSS must possess to achieve the team's vision, including enhanced ability to:

- Engage in effective two-way dialogue with policymakers, data users in all sectors, and other stakeholders on priorities, programs, and products (ACDEB 2022: Recommendations Part 3, 41–2; National Academies 2023a:65–72.);

[13] The project team based its roadmap on what is termed a "maturation" or "maturity" model, a tool used by businesses and national statistical offices for effecting modernization in stages—see Section 5.
[14] Appendix 1 describes the organization of the federal statistical system as of March 2025.

- Create and sustain a system-wide culture of innovation and collaboration (OMB 2015b; National Academies 2025:41–4.);
- Share investments among agencies to improve efficiency and make data systems, sources, and products more interoperable and interconnected in a privacy-protective manner (ACDEB 2022:102; Modernization document 3.);
- Form durable, comprehensive partnerships with other federal agencies, state and local governments, and private-sector entities on data standards, data-sharing, and data access (CEP 2017:20, 41–42, 85; U.S. Congress 2019: Title III 5529–36; ACDEB 2022:102; Modernization documents 2, 3, 4.); and
- Safeguard privacy in ways that do not undercut the public good of widely available data but that protect against political interference and misuse for administrative, regulatory, or enforcement proceedings against individuals and organizations (GAO 2025:24–30; National Academies 2025:34–41.).

With enhanced capabilities, a 21st century federal statistical system could tap far more data sources to create blended data series; develop, vet, and harness AI-supported production, dissemination, and analysis tools; issue more frequent statistics (e.g., daily and weekly) in accessible formats; make it easier to find and use data on related topics across multiple agencies; respond nimbly to emerging data needs; have effective means to sunset obsolete methods and concepts; and maintain trust with policymakers and the public.

Support

Major transformation requires support, and the proposed 21st century modernization of the FSS is a major transformation. Experts understand this reform will require gaining active support from Congress and the administration (including OMB and agency leadership) (CEP 2017:3–4; U.S. Congress 2019: Title III 5529–36; Modernization documents 2, 3, 4.). Such support will need to include:

- Prioritization and buy-in by all parties of the importance of a multifaceted effort to change legislation, regulations, and procedures to facilitate interoperability and agility to enable the FSS to efficiently meet evolving needs (see Box 3-1 for an example of an administrative burden that needs to be minimized for statistical agency effectiveness) (CEP 2017:17–19; U.S. Congress 2019: Title III 5529–36; ACDEB 2022 Recommendation 1.5: 26–27; Modernization documents 2, 3, 4.);
- Additional resources (budget, staffing, partnerships) to enable major change while keeping the FSS “ship” running smoothly, including additional resources for the chief statistician’s office and the ICSP to step up needed coordination, system-wide planning, and other functions to lead major change (ASA 2024: 11.);
- Creative use of public–private partnerships, including methodological work in partnership with academic experts, to fund pilot projects for needed innovations; (e.g., high-quality food

price indexes updated on a daily basis from private-sector data) (National Academies 2025: 62; Modernization documents 3, 4.);

- Engagement with the full range of users and other stakeholders of federal statistics for feedback as the process proceeds (ACDEB 2022 Recommendation 3.11:62.); and
- Steps to bolster public trust in federal statistics, their objectivity, the legitimacy of federal surveys, statistical agencies' willingness and ability to keep information confidential and used only for statistical purposes, and statistical agencies' commitment to transparency and openness to data user and data provider feedback.[15]

Box 3-1. Reducing Administrative Burden on Statistical Agencies

Many operations of federal statistical agencies require Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) and Data Use Agreements (DUAs)—for example, to enable SOI/IRS to provide tax data to BEA, the Census Bureau, or NASS, which are essential for gross domestic product (GDP), the Economic Census, and the Census of Agriculture. BLS estimates it has about 100 MOUs with the Census Bureau alone and 110 Cooperative Agreements with 50 states and 4 territories. BEA has 27 agreements with other federal agencies. Other statistical agency heads have attested to the many staff hours required to draft and execute these documents *

Standard templates, such as those developed to inform a future National Secure Data Service (NSDS), are a necessary but far from sufficient step toward reducing the administrative burden: also required will be inculcation of adherence to standard templates (i.e., don't reinvent the wheel) and stringent requirements for timely processing, together with reengineering the drafting and review processes for maximum efficiency. Processing times need to be reduced from many months and even years to tight but feasible standards depending on the complexity of the document.

*Asking Claude and ChatGPT for estimates of time and resources to process MOUs and DUAs returned extensive reviews of agency experiences and relevant literature. According to Claude, "The literature is consistent that MOU and data use agreement (DUA) negotiations take far longer than most stakeholders anticipate." ChatGPT broke down the approval process into stages from initiation to final signoff and execution and provided time estimates for the entire process: 4 to 6 months (lower bound), 6 to 12 months (typical), 12 to 18+ months (complex cases).

SOURCE: *Queries posed 3/24/26 by the project team.*

4: EVOLUTION THROUGH INNOVATION: A HISTORY OF FEDERAL STATISTICS

As part of our work, we reviewed the history of the FSS to glean lessons for the modernization effort. Our review identified three overlapping but distinct eras in the evolution of the FSS, which

[15] Fostering trust includes support for the fundamental principles and practices for a federal statistical agency outlined in Title III of the Evidence Act (U.S. Congress 2019), by the Committee on National Statistics (National Academies 2025), and in the "Trust" regulation (OMB 2024). It also includes adherence to the Fair Information Practices Principles (FIPPs), "a collection of widely accepted principles that agencies use when evaluating information systems, processes, programs, and activities that affect individual privacy." The FIPPs include such attributes as data quality, transparency, authority for and minimization of data collection, consultation with data providers on privacy concerns, and accountability (see DVA 2023; FPC 2022).

are important to understand where we are now and what will be required to fully modernize the system. Tables 4-1, 4-2, and 4-3 capture key features of each era.[16]

We stress that data users' needs for relevant, accurate, timely, and granular information, along with efforts to provide data more economically, motivated transitions from one era to the next. More generally, policymakers saw the benefit of establishing statistical capability at the federal level when particular subject areas became relevant for federal policymaking.[17] Crucially, the Constitution (Article I, Section 2) charged the federal government to conduct a population census every 10 years to peacefully reapportion seats in the House of Representatives, and the census became the vehicle for additional data collection in a variety of subject areas. Article II, Section 3, required the president from time to time to give Congress information on "the state of the union," which motivated reports on the U.S. economy beginning under the first Treasury Secretary, Alexander Hamilton.

The First Era (1790 to 1960)

The early decades of the first era (see Table 4-1) saw not only the institution of the decennial census of population but also the inauguration of censuses of manufactures and agriculture. Throughout, multiple statistical agencies such as BLS were established to gather relevant information as policy issues (population and business, trade, agriculture, education, labor, income, social security) rose to the federal level.[18]

Statistical agencies in this period carried out censuses and released data in printed reports with limited content and considerable delay. Toward the end of the first era, the Great Depression made it imperative to have more frequent, accurate, and less costly data on unemployment, prices, and other subjects; in response, agencies developed and introduced new sample-based methods.

The Great Depression also saw efforts to coordinate the sprawling FSS. A Central Statistical Board—the predecessor to today's Statistical Policy Office—was established in the 1930s in the Budget Bureau, and the 1942 Federal Reports Act required the Budget Bureau to clear all requests, such as surveys, to query people and businesses. Numerous proposals (as early as 1903 and continuing to the present) were offered to consolidate one or more statistical agencies.

Finally, this first era saw the first attempts to wall off individuals' data provided to statistical agencies from use for administrative or enforcement purposes. Early censuses were not

[16] The three eras represent broad periods in the history of the federal statistical system, each with a predominant data collection paradigm (censuses, surveys, blended data, respectively). Eras overlap so the dates provided for them in Tables 4-1, 4-2, and 4-3 are approximate. See ASA 2024: Supporting Material: B (origins-and-overview-of-the-federal-statistical-system.pdf) and the sources cited therein.

[17] State governments were often out ahead of the federal government in establishing their own statistical capability. For example, 13 states established labor statistics bureaus (Massachusetts was first in 1869) prior to the creation of BLS in 1884. And, from the outset, states maintained records of births and deaths, which, beginning in 1902, became the basis of the federal–state National Vital Statistics System overseen since 1960 by NCHS.

[18] Topics are listed in order of establishment of a statistical office. The agencies with these portfolios today are the Census Bureau, BEA, NASS and ERS, NCES, BLS, SOI/IRS, and ORES/SSA.

confidential (responses were posted publicly for inspection). The 1909 Census Act provided that "no publication shall be made by the Census Office whereby the data furnished by any particular establishment can be identified" (36 Stat. 9). "Individual" was added in 1929 (46 Stat. 25). When Congress codified Title 13 in August 1954, this provision remained.

Table 4-1. The Evolution of the Federal Statistical System: Era 1.0 (1790 to 1960)

Key Features		
Methodology	**Structural**	**Data Product and Processing**
• ***Predominantly censuses:*** Some convenience samples • Early federal–state cooperative data programs (e.g., vital statistics) • Agencies pioneer early probability sample surveys (e.g., CPS begun in 1940, Consumer Expenditure Survey in 1950)	• **Localized/siloed:** Individual agencies set up in separate departments (e.g., agriculture, education, labor, income, health) • Some coordination (e.g., Central Statistical Board 1933; Federal Reports Clearance Act 1942) • First proposals to consolidate agencies (1903, 1908)	• Punch card technology invented to cope with voluminous census data (first used in 1890 census) • **Printed reports** (required long release time); special tabulations could be prepared for a user fee • Statistical agencies developed rules for suppressing data in reports to protect confidentiality (e.g., not publishing statistics based on too few data points)

The Second Era (1960 to 1995)

The second era (see Table 4-2) saw probability sampling take root as the primary data collection method. Sample surveys coupled with the early adoption by the agencies of computer processing made it possible to provide a cornucopia of data products that were more timely and less costly and burdensome compared with censuses and could be provided to users in multiple computer-readable formats.

Coordination mechanisms were undercut in the late 1970s and early 1980s[19] and then strengthened but left under-resourced. Additional statistical agencies were stood up (science and engineering, health, energy, justice, transportation)[20] (National Academies 2025:50.).

Computerization had many benefits but amplified concerns about databanks and breaches of confidentiality. Several acts and regulations responded (1974 Privacy Act, 1974 Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 1974 regulations for the protection of human subjects, 1976 Tax Reform Act); most statistical agencies, however, did not have legislation guaranteeing confidentiality protection, but only strong norms.

Statistical agencies developed various ways to blur or omit data to protect privacy (e.g., using "top-coded" categories, such as "age greater than 85"). These and other statistical disclosure limitation techniques (SDLs) required—and received—significant investment to protect the identities of individuals whose data were used in statistical products. The investment paid off:

[19] Statistical policy and questionnaire review functions were separated under the Carter administration, and the Reagan administration did not appoint a chief statistician for several years (Congress authorized the position in 1986).

[20] These agencies are NCSES, NCHS, EIA, BJS, and BTS.

SDLs used by federal statistical agencies were state of the art. Similarly, the creation of research data centers and other highly protected data enclaves allowed vetted users to access confidential data, consistent with agency missions, while also protecting against breaches of confidentiality.

Table 4-2. The Evolution of the Federal Statistical System: Era 2.0 (1960 to 1995)

Key Features		
Methodology	**Structural**	**Data Product and Processing**
• **Probability sample** surveys (vastly cheaper, less burdensome than censuses) • Federal–state cooperative data programs (administrative records–population, labor force, agriculture, education, justice) • New methods of confidentiality protection (e.g., swapping) and access to confidential data through "enclaves" (secure environments, such as statistical agency facilities)	• Additional individual agencies established (e.g., justice, energy, transportation) • Localized/siloed but with **additional coordination** mechanisms codified (1986 Paperwork Reduction Act [PRA] authorizes chief statistician's office but reduced staff compared with prior years) • Committee on National Statistics established (1972) to help statistical agency leaders coordinate, innovate, address user needs • Proposals to consolidate two or more agencies and/or strengthen coordinating mechanism (1966, 1971, 1976, 1985, 1995)	• Agencies pioneer **computer technology** to speed up/improve processing/expand products • Agencies pioneer **computerized data products** (summary files, public-use microdata samples, release via the Internet) • Uniform federal classifications for industries, occupations, products, geography, demographics • Coordination with international standards

The Third Era (1995 to Present)

Around 1995, the FSS entered the third era (see Table 4-3) in which blended data systems (integration of survey responses, administrative records, and private-sector data sources) began to be the method of choice for relevant, high-quality statistics. Motivating this development are the declines in response rates undercutting the accuracy of sample surveys, increased demand for more detailed and localized statistics, and at the same time a plethora of new data sources (surveys, administrative records, private-sector data) becoming available for blending.

As they entered the third era, statistical agencies developed more cross-agency initiatives and benefited from more coordination following the 1995 Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) amendments, which codified the ICSP, chaired by the chief statistician in OMB. The 2018 Evidence Act strengthened the chief statistician's coordination role to serve the goal of making federal statistical data more accessible for evidence-based policymaking (CEP 2017:24–39, 80–93, 101–4; U.S. Congress 2019: Title III 5529–36; ACDEB 2022:39–42, 84; National Academies 2025:50).

To more effectively coordinate federal statistical issues, the ICSP drew on the Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology (FCSM), originally established in 1975 by the OMB statistical policy office. Members of FCSM, selected in their individual capacity as federal

statisticians, formed committees to develop interagency guidance in implementing federal statistical policies and best practices. Statistical disclosure limitation guidance (most recently in the form of the Data Protection Toolkit) (FCSM 2024) and application of privacy enhancing technologies to federal statistical data access are two examples of work streams. As another example, the FCSM data quality framework provides guidance on the implementation of ICSP data quality principles, focusing on improvements to documentation and transparency (FCSM 2020:18–20; National Academies 2025:50.).[21]

During this period, the availability of so much data "out there," private-sector confidentiality breaches, and, now, the administration's efforts to access tax and Social Security data for enforcement have heightened concerns that statistical data could be threatened; concerns have also increased that statistical data could be manipulated or otherwise be less accurate and timely than needed. Legislation and OMB directives and regulations have attempted to address these concerns (e.g., the 1997 Order Providing for the Confidentiality of Statistical Information; the 2002 Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act [CIPSEA], subsequently incorporated into the 2018 Evidence Act; the 2002 Education Sciences Reform Act; and the 2024 Rule on Fundamental Responsibilities of Federal Statistical Agencies and Recognized Units ["Trust" regulation]). CIPSEA (Title III of the Evidence Act) imposes stiff penalties on statistical agency staff and their agents (e.g., contractors, authorized researchers) for breaches of confidentiality. There are no penalties, however, for confidentiality breaches by nonstatistical federal agencies or other entities or for failure to respect the integrity and expertise of statistical agencies.

Table 4-3. The Evolution of the Federal Statistical System: Era 3.0 (1995 to Present)

Key Features		
Methodology	**Structural**	**Data Product and Processing**
• Surveys remain important, but blended data programs become more common (combining survey responses with administrative records and private-sector data) • Statistical agencies explore new confidentiality protection techniques (e.g., synthetic data)	• 1995 PRA codifies ICSP • 2018 Evidence Act creates more mechanisms for cross-agency coordination around shared vision, cross-agency initiatives, but agencies remain siloed in departments, coordination mechanisms under-resourced • Proposals to consolidate BEA, BLS, and Census Bureau (Obama and Trump administrations)	• Some survey-based products lose granularity because of lower response • More accurate, relevant, timely key statistics created by blending data • Tiered access strives to balance data utility and accessibility with confidentiality (tiers include more limited public-use products and added restrictions for more sensitive data) • Access to confidential data in secure environments expands research insights relevant for policy and public awareness

[21] FCSM recently updated its data quality framework to address best practices for making statistical agencies' data AI-ready (FCSM 2025).

The Road Ahead

Although the FSS has entered the third era of heavy reliance on blended data, many factors stand in the way of full adoption of a blended data approach or, more generally, of the FSS being able to respond quickly to changing data needs by taking advantage of new methods and technologies (see Section 5 below). A principal factor is that the FSS remains highly decentralized, and there has been a failure to legislatively address numerous structural and legal barriers that impede true collaboration among the agencies, including the ability to share data and resources. None of the many proposals over the past 120 years to modernize the FSS by consolidating one or more statistical agencies has come to fruition.[22] We take this failure seriously. Our proposal seeks, instead, to achieve many of the goals of consolidation while avoiding many of the prior roadblocks. Only if this effort should fall short would it be necessary to reconsider consolidation.

Another challenge is to protect trust in the accuracy and objectivity of federal statistics and in the ability of the FSS to keep individuals' and organizations' data confidential, particularly when statistics derive from data linkage and use of complex methods for data integration. The 2018 Evidence Act helped by:

- incorporating the 2002 CIPSEA, which, as noted above, enacted stiff penalties for statistical agency staff and their agents (e.g., contractors and researchers) who breach confidentiality of individuals' and organizations' data;
- incorporating Statistical Policy Directive No. 1 on the fundamental responsibilities of federal statistical agencies, which include the duty to be objective, to produce accurate, relevant, timely, and credible statistics, and to protect confidentiality; and
- requiring cabinet departments to support and protect their statistical agencies (OMB 2014a; U.S. Congress 2019: Title III 5529–36; ACDEB 2022:39–42, 84; National Academies 2025:27).

5: FROM SILOED TO ADAPTIVE: STAGES OF MODERN SYSTEMS

As described in Section 4, the FSS has continued to evolve since its first beginnings to better serve policymakers and the public. It has done this by identifying priorities and applying innovative solutions. The FSS has entered the third historical era characterized by broader use of blended data and greater interagency coordination. These innovations in technique and policy have allowed the FSS to develop novel data products and take advantage of opportunities to reduce cost and improve efficiencies. But, as noted in Section 3, barriers have limited progress (National Academies 2025:17–23, 27; Modernization documents 2, 3.). The time is now to overcome these barriers.

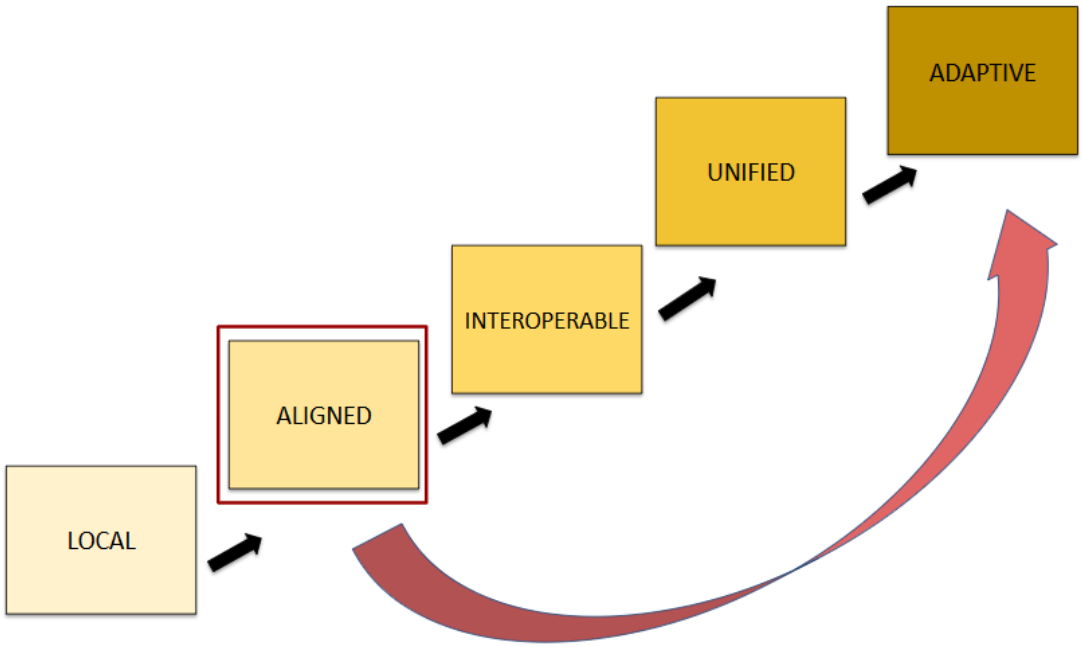
Our project team consulted guidance widely used to modernize and develop capacity in various industries, including statistical systems. See Figure 5-1. Looking at this model, the project team can trace the evolution of the FSS (Section 4) within the development and functioning of a

[22] See ASA 2024: Supporting Materials: C (previous-assessments-of-the-federal-statistical-system.pdf).

modern (resilient) system. As we argue below, although the FSS still contains several characteristics of a localized system, several advancements have been made to improve alignment (denoted by the red-outlined box) in functioning across federal statistical agencies. Yet this model also shows where the FSS currently falls short—and where it needs to go (denoted by the red arrow). We conclude that, to realize its full potential, the FSS needs to move as expeditiously as possible to achieve the functions of a modern system.

Below we describe the key features of each of these stages. Although progress can be made within each of these stages concurrently, fuller achievement of earlier stages will facilitate progress of later stages. That is, stages cannot simply be skipped; functionality in each is necessary for an adaptive system.

Figure 5-1. A Modernization Model



NOTE: The red-outlined box indicates the current development stage of the FSS in the project team's view. The red arrow points to the modernization goal. The black arrows describe progress along development stages.

SOURCE: Adapted from https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/business-process-maturity-practice-five-level-model-case-yale-wang-2vq8c/dIn.

Localized

In the particular capacity development framework that underlies the project team's proposed stages,[23] the FSS at present retains several elements of a "**localized**" stage in which practices and procedures are specific to the entities in a system and there is limited cross-entity coordination. Some of the ways in which localization persists are:

- the FSS still has no one-stop shopping for data users;
- websites and data access capabilities vary widely among agencies;
- sharing of administrative and other data that could benefit more than one statistical program is impossible in some instances because of legal barriers and very difficult otherwise, requiring tedious negotiations to draw up and renew MOUs;
- there is no effective mechanism to ensure that decisions by one agency (e.g., to cancel a statistical program or reduce it in scope) take account of the dependencies of other agencies on the data or statistical products;[24]
- agencies are hamstrung in many departments by constraints on IT modernization and cannot share services such as IT or staff training; and
- enormous variation exists in agencies' resources and ability to innovate (from the Census Bureau's $1.5 billion budget to budgets under $50 million for BJS, BTS, ORES/SSA, and SOI/IRS).

Despite these barriers, the FSS delivers exceptional products. It is to the federal statistical agencies' credit that they reliably meet time tables for ongoing data releases, adhere to strict data quality and transparency rules, and nonetheless continue to innovate in many ways. See Table 5-1 for several examples and their current status. Generally speaking, however, from users' testimonies and our own assessment, agencies are not able to innovate at the pace or with the efficiency needed for the 21st century.

Table 5-1. Selected Recent Innovations by Federal Statistical Agencies

Innovation Domain	Brief Description	Statistical Agency	Current Status
Data concepts/ topics	AI Adoption in the Economy	Census Bureau with NCSES (supplements on the ABS and BTOS; R&D expenses for AI on BERD)	Ongoing, latest ABS supplements are for 2023 and 2026; much more content needed; BERD merged into ABS in 2026

[23] Maturation models provide a structured approach to assess current capabilities and identify areas for improvement. They typically consist of several stages or levels, each representing a different degree of maturity, from initial or chaotic processes to optimized and continuously improving practices. The project team's stages borrow from the nomenclature often used in modernizing defense systems and capabilities, which seemed to fit the evolution of the decentralized FSS. For an example of a staged approach to modernization of national statistical office functions with a different nomenclature,see https://unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/stats/documents/ece/ces/ge.58/2016/mtg4/PPT_25_MMM_20160902.pdf.

[24] Examples include a BLS decision to discontinue components of a monthly survey that fed into an ERS food consumption tracking on food at home and away from home, and a NASS decision to discontinue county yield data estimates, which several other USDA agencies relied on. In neither case was there a means for the agencies that owned the data to become aware of, let alone, be required to take account of the other agencies' needs.

Innovation Domain	Brief Description	Statistical Agency	Current Status
	Global Value Chains	BEA with NCSES	Ongoing, latest estimates are for 2024
Data collection	Facilitating Business Response to Surveys	Census Bureau (inputting company data); BLS (streamlining surveys)	Census initiative promises important improvements in response and quality, but going slowly
	Facilitating Household Response to the CPS (CPS Modernization)	BLS and Census Bureau (e.g., Internet option)	Project needs resources to be implemented in a timely and thorough-going manner
Data processing/ estimation (examples of blended data)	Adult Literacy Estimates for States and Counties for 2003	NCES (used models with 1990 & 2000 census data to predict adult literacy from national surveys, with some state samples)	One-off project because no new adult literacy survey since 2003
	Business Formation Statistics for States (monthly/weekly) & Counties (annual)	Census Bureau (links of IRS EIN applications with Census Longitudinal Business Database)	Ongoing (begun in 2018 as experimental product; became regular product in 2021)
	Household Distributions of Personal Income (PI)	BEA (allocating PI to CPS ASEC using CPS and administrative data; "nowcasting" for timeliness)	Ongoing, latest estimates are for 2024; need comparable estimates with Census
	National Experimental Well-Being Statistics (NEWS)	Census Bureau (using other data with CPS ASEC to improve income data)	Ongoing; latest estimates are for 2021
	National Health Care Survey (NHCS) Linkages	NCHS (linked NHCS with housing, other data)	Latest linkages are of 2016 NHCS with 2020 VA data (also linkages of NAMCS available, latest of 2021 NAMCS with 2022 NDI and HUD data)
	National Secure Data Service (NSDS)	NCSES for ICSP (tool for secure data linkage)	Ongoing as a pilot
Data dissemination	Crop Condition & Soil Moisture Analytics Tool (CROP-CASMA)	NASS, with NASA and George Mason University (satellite imagery, updated daily)	Ongoing, housed at NASA, depends on continuation of NASA satellite system
	Just the Stats	BJS (quick facts)	Ongoing, latest report issued May 2026 with 2022-2023 data
	The Opportunity Project (TOP)	Census Bureau (involves outside organizations in sprints using federal data for practical applications)	Ongoing

Innovation Domain	Brief Description	Statistical Agency	Current Status
	Standard Application Process (SAP)	ICPSR for NCSES and ICSP (tool to make it easier for researchers and other users to locate and apply to use confidential datasets from statistical agencies in a secure setting; established in response to the 2018 Evidence Act)	Ongoing, but several agencies are no longer able to accept applications

NOTE: ABS = Annual Business Survey; BERD = Business Enterprise R&D Survey; BTOS = Business Trends and Opportunities Survey; CPS ASEC = Current Population Survey Social and Economic Supplement; EIN = employer identification number; HUD = U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; ICPSR = Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research, University of Michigan; ICSP = Interagency Council on Statistical Policy; NAMCS = National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey; NDI = National Death Index.
SOURCE: Adapted from ASA 2025b *The Nation's Data at Risk: 2025 Report*, Supporting Materials H, Table H-1.

Aligned

The FSS has become more "aligned" since the 1995 PRA authorized the ICSP and since the passage of the 2018 Evidence Act. In an "aligned" stage, there is much more cross-agency coordination around a shared vision, early data standardization, and emerging system-wide governance.

An example of recent achievement in aligning vision, data standards. and system-wide governance across the FSS is the National Secure Data Service (NSDS). First proposed in CEP (2017), further envisioned in ACDEB (2022), and funded through the 2022 CHIPS and Science Act, this flagship project represents a shared vision intended to facilitate resource-sharing and secure data linkage for evidence-based policymaking. The effort is coordinated through a subcommittee of the ICSP and developed through an interagency partnership with NCSES. The demonstration project is expected to launch in 2026 and to be complete in 2027. (See OMB 2022; NCSES 2024.)

The NSDS is an important and promising resource, but the funding needed to scale and sustain this project has not yet been secured. Even if funded, the NSDS shared services model alone cannot fully realize the modern statistical system the public needs—one that is resilient and adaptive. The FSS needs to quickly become even more aligned and take actions to move to the "interoperable" stage (OMB 2015a; Modernization documents 3, 4).

Interoperable

Interoperable systems are foundational for system-wide FSS planning and maximizing efficiency. At this stage, statistical agencies' data products, policies, and operational systems would be sufficiently compatible to allow system-wide access to datasets to support blended data approaches, sharing of operational services where desirable, consistent privacy protections, and enhanced capabilities for user data access. For more on the characteristics of this stage and actions to achieve it FSS-wide, see "Achieving Interoperable Systems" below.

Unified

Next to work toward are **unified systems** once sufficient progress has been made on interoperable systems. In unified systems, the FSS agencies' operational systems would be fully compatible to allow planning of system-wide priorities and investments. Agencies would have standardized processes and governance, strong within-agency and cross-agency interoperability, high data quality and transparency, and effective confidentiality and privacy protections. Note that "unified" is not meant to be a synonym for actual organizational consolidation of two or more agencies. Instead, the goal is a strongly functionally integrated FSS. See "Building Toward Unified Systems" below for more details[25] (ACDEB 2022:39–42, 84).

Adaptive

Adaptive systems are achieved when statistical agencies have highly automated, resilient, and agile operational and research systems, which are sufficiently standardized (or unified) that the FSS as a whole can routinely address established statistical product needs, anticipate emerging needs, and proactively incorporate new data sources (National Academies 2023a:101–5; Modernization documents 3 and 4.). In effect, statistical agencies would be operating as a functionally integrated, agile, and responsive system serving and trusted by policymakers and the public (FCSM 2020:18–20; OMB 2024; GAO 2025; National Academies 2025; Modernization document 4.).

6: FROM MODEL TO ACTION: A MODERNIZATION ROADMAP

The 30 recommendations in this section are intended to move the FSS through the interoperable and unified stages to the adaptive stage in a sequenced and timely manner. They include mechanisms to evaluate progress at each stage and identify course corrections as needed. The time frame provided for each recommendation (30 days, 100 days) is intended to represent a feasible albeit stretch goal. We assume the clock will start on July 1, 2026, allowing some time for discussion of this report after it is publicly released.

As we noted at the outset, the roadmap does not and cannot answer all questions about implementation of the 30 recommendations. As an example, how an innovation fund would be administered and appropriated (recommendations 27 and 28) will require careful consideration. One alternative could be for Congress to allocate innovation funds in appropriations for specific statistical agencies and initiatives determined in advance by a cross-agency priority-setting effort involving the chief statistician, the ICSP, and other stakeholders. There may be other means as well to achieve the goal of regularly appropriated funding for system-wide, cross-agency innovations. Should it not be possible to fully implement these and other recommendations, which are necessary to achieve an interoperable, unified, and adaptive FSS while leaving agencies in their current departmental homes, we believe that structural

[25] One example of emerging "unifying" policies is FCSM 2020, A Framework for Data Quality, pp. 18–20 (Domains & dimensions).

consolidation of statistical agencies (see Section 7) is essential. We reiterate that the modernization effort is too important to leave only partly implemented.

Getting Started

Congressional and presidential actions are required to jumpstart and underscore the importance of the modernization process for the FSS—see our first two recommendations below in Table 6-1. Each branch has authorities and roles to play to ensure the modernization process succeeds. To bolster public and policymaker trust in federal statistics, each branch should affirm its support for a strong FSS that can carry out its mission to provide objective, credible, accurate, timely, granular, and relevant data for statistical uses by policymakers and the public.

To ensure accountability, Congress should not only draw on evaluation capacity from GAO, but also support and address recommendations from the administration in evaluating progress in FSS modernization. In that regard, OMB brings valuable expertise, and the Council of Inspectors General (IGs) on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE) is required by the 2024 Trust Regulation to establish appropriate performance criteria for the IGs to perform regular audits of the statistical agencies.[26]

Table 6-1. Recommendations for Getting Started: Launch FSS Modernization

#	Recommended Actions[27]	Rationale	Time
1	The administration should publicly launch the modernization of the federal statistical system. ● This effort should include a modernization roadmap. ● It should establish a high-level implementation task force of federal staff to ensure and prioritize sustained modernization. ● The implementation task force should cooperate with Congress and GAO (see Recommendation 2) to assess progress, provide input into modernization legislation, and recommend resource levels to support modernization. ● The chief statistician's office and the ICSP should receive significant additional staff resources to carry out their responsibilities in the implementation of the roadmap and in directing a modernized FSS.	● The executive and legislative branches of government should understand their responsibility to work together on modernization. (See 2.) ● The implementation task force should be able to engage parent agencies in supporting statistical agencies (and the ICSP) in accomplishing the roadmap tasks, rather than adding to their burden. (Parent agencies are responsible under the 2018 Evidence Act and 2024 Trust Regulation to support their statistical agencies.)	30 days

[26] The requirement technically is to audit the recognized statistical agencies and units (RSAUs) every 3 years. The recognized agencies are the principal statistical agencies considered in this report; the units are components of several agencies that applied for recognition under CIPSEA to have confidentiality protection for their contractors and researchers.

[27] These recommendations are informed by several foundational documents: the FIPPS, the CEP, the Evidence Act, and the ACDEB 2 Year Report. See Appendix 3 for a mapping of concepts and summary of alignment.

#	Recommended Actions[27]	Rationale	Time
2	The Congress should organize to support, enable, and address recommendations from, and ensure continued progress by, the administration in its work to modernize the federal statistical system. This effort could be informed by OMB implementation of existing performance measurement requirements and legally required audits of statistical agencies by CIGIE and the IGs, as well as directed evaluations by GAO.	• Congress provides the essential tools to implement and sustain the modernization effort, i.e., legislation and funding. • To facilitate progress and periodic assessment, congressional committees can: (1) conduct oversight (including requiring executive reporting and public hearings), and (2) engage oversight activities by OMB, the IGs and CIGIE, and GAO. • The statistical system is under the jurisdiction of multiple congressional committees and appropriations subcommittees. The House and Senate government oversight committees oversee OMB and its core statutes and therefore also have a role. • Leadership from within the Congress will be essential to engaging, overseeing, funding, and spurring progress on the administration's efforts, including acting on legislative proposals. • OMB implements performance measurement requirements through its management and budget components. They are uniquely suited to examine system-wide planning and performance needs. • CIGIE and IGs are required by the Trust Regulation to provide FSS system-wide performance criteria and compliance audits for the statistical agencies, respectively. • GAO is uniquely situated and has capacity to provide evaluation expertise to Congress.	30 days

First Priority: Achieving Interoperable Systems

When applied to the federal statistical system as a whole, interoperability describes desirable characteristics of data production systems (including data ingestion, linkage, and estimation); data dissemination systems (including documentation and access tools); and other operational systems (e.g., IT, legal, and administrative). **Interoperable systems** are sufficiently compatible to allow system-wide access and linking of data sources and sharing of IT and other services using strong confidentiality protections. Such interoperability, in turn, enables streamlined processing and more efficient and appropriate, controlled data access. Interoperable systems can provide new high-frequency, coherent, and granular products, accompanied by standardized metadata and state-of-the-art access tools, allowing users to find and relate products seamlessly. Interoperatibility can also enable greater responsiveness to user needs by building on FSS-wide data and operational standards for faster product development. (ACDEB 2022:58; National Academies 2025:65–72.)

The minimum imperative for the decentralized U.S. statistical system to achieve interoperability is to drastically lower the barriers to sharing data responsibly among the principal federal statistical agencies within the confidentiality and exclusively statistical purpose framework provided by Title III of the Evidence Act, supported by PETs to minimize exposure risk

throughout the data lifecycle.[28] Without seamless data sharing, agencies cannot create blended data sets in a timely manner to maximize the advantages and minimize the drawbacks of surveys, administrative records, and other data sources. (National Academies 2023a:65–72; 2023b; 2024; Modernization documents 3, 4.) Moreover, seamless data sharing actually makes it possible to enhance privacy protections using state-of-the-art PETs, protocols, and frameworks in a consistent manner across agencies.

Other steps toward interoperability include pooling resources for innovation, training, professional development, and similar activities so that both large and small statistical agencies can reach the state of the art. Steps toward interoperability have the benefit of facilitating steps toward greater frequency of data, more cost-effective operations, and reduced burden on data providers (OMB 2015b; ACDEB 2022.).

Achieving the interoperability stage depends critically on trust from data providers, users, and decisionmakers. Data providers, which include household and business survey respondents, federal, state, and local custodians of administrative records, and private-sector data sources, must trust that their privacy is respected and that the data they provide are kept confidential and used only for statistical purposes. Data providers, users, and decisionmakers must trust that federal statistics are objective reflections of the nation and responsive to user needs. (National Academies 2025 Principle 2:32-34.)

The recommended actions below collectively aim to enable more efficient statistical processing, a well-functioning data-sharing infrastructure, and greater accountability to data users and providers to ensure that only needed data are collected and that all data are walled off from administrative or enforcement use and adequately protected. In turn, these features of an interoperable FSS should improve the usefulness of statistical data products, make data production more efficient, and strengthen trust.

We emphasize that interoperability of systems is not consolidation of agencies. In fact, it is by making agency systems more compatible that a need for consolidation can be obviated. An example of interoperability is the National Vital Statistics System, involving NCHS and vital registration areas (states, DC, NYC, and 5 US territories)--see Box 6-1.

Box 6-1. Interoperability: The Vital Statistics System

The National Vital Statistics System (NVSS) began in 1902 with Congress authorizing the newly established Census Bureau to develop vital registration areas state by state for comparable birth and death records. The function was transferred to the Public Health Service in 1946 and then to NCHS on its founding in 1960. Contracts from NCHS reimburse 57 jurisdictions (the 50 states, the District of Columbia, New York City, and 5 US territories) to report vital statistics data to the agency. These data

[28] As noted in CNSTAT's Principles and Practices for a Federal Statistical Agency (8th ed., National Academies, 2025, p. 14), Title III of the Evidence Act (paraphrasing) defines "statistical purpose or use" as describing, estimating, or analyzing the characteristics of groups without identifying their individual members. In contrast a "nonstatistical purpose" uses identifiable data in administrative, regulatory, law enforcement, or legal actions that pertain to the rights and privileges of a particular respondent.

are indeed vital, not only providing official reports of births and deaths but feeding other federal statistics, such as the Census Bureau's annual population estimates program.

The NVSS has been hampered by inadequate resources for NCHS and the states (e.g., it took over a decade for all states to adopt standard birth and death certificates with federal race and ethnicity reporting categories). Nonetheless, the system has become more efficient and interoperable over time. NCHS has worked closely with jurisdictions on standard birth and death certificates, data collection and reporting standards, and similar functions. The National Association for Public Health Statistics and Information Systems (NAPHSIS) has worked with its members to develop software platforms that permit easy, encrypted transfer of vital records among states and with NCHS and otherwise improve the efficiency of state vital records systems.

During the COVID-19 epidemic, NCHS made important improvements–developing certification guidance, adjusting internal processing systems (e.g., cause-of-death coding, auditing, review), and standing up a surveillance system, all of which made it possible to speed up the release of COVID-19 death estimates. See Advancements in the National Vital Statistics System to Meet the Real-Time Data Needs of a Pandemic - PMC.

Enable More Efficient Statistical Processing

The set of recommendations in Table 6-2 addresses the need for the FSS to improve federal statistics—such as by producing higher-frequency data sets, which many users have said are important to them—by accelerating adoption of innovative technologies for more efficient operations. In particular, adoption of thoroughly vetted AI tools, as appropriate according to FSS-wide standards, could facilitate such functions as rapid classification, documentation, ingestion, and standardization of data provided in different formats by commercial, academic, and government entities. Thus, recommendations 3 and 4 call for public-private partnerships for research on AI uses to improve federal statistics, PETs to ensure data acquired from multiple sources and blended together are used only for statistical purposes and are appropriately protected, and other methodological issues in developing blended data. Federal statistical agencies also need to attach permanent identifiers to documentation and products and make their data AI-ready (recommendations 5 and 6). AI-readiness essentially means that data must be well organized and documented, not only to be most usable in AI applications, but also to be findable by data users. Finally, there is a recommendation 7 to address legal and other barriers that are identified in the recommended research on higher-frequency data, AI use, and the development of PETs.

Table 6-2. Recommendations for an Interoperable System: Improve Statistical Efficiency

#	Recommended Actions	Rationale	Time
A	***Enable extensive use of new collection and analytical processes***		
3	The administration should launch a public–private partnership funded by NSF's Directorate for Technology, Innovation, and Partnerships (TIP)[29] and led by the FSS' National Secure Data Service (NSDS) demonstration project,	• The primary purpose of the proposed public–private partnership involving TIP and NSDS is to boost FSS innovation in such areas as higher-frequency data and AI use (see also (4)). • For example, several statistical agencies are	100 days

[29] See https://www.nsf.gov/tip.

#	Recommended Actions	Rationale	Time
	with input from academic and corporate experts. This partnership should expand FSS capacity to create higher-frequency data (e.g., for prices and employment). The partnership's portfolio should include R&D on AI tools to organize "live feed" data acquisition from companies to facilitate higher frequency data. The partnership should also investigate innovative methods to improve federal statistics in other ways, including confidentiality protection.	working on systems to obtain responses directly from company systems ("live feed" data acquisition) rather than from surveys, and AI tools could facilitate translating company records into data the agencies need for policymakers and the public. • TIP is very well funded and has a highly compatible purpose, with high-priority areas that include data storage and management and AI.	
4	The administration should extend the partnership between the National Artificial Intelligence Research Resources (NAIRR)[30] pilot, led by NSF, and the NSDS, using NAIRR funding, to address methodological challenges in blending data for federal statistics, including advancing the use of privacy-enhancing techniques (PETs) in AI applications and estimating variance and other sources of error in data linkage.	• This partnership will enable FSS innovation and advance NAIRR's mission. • NAIRR is a relatively generously funded activity compared to NSDS. • NAIRR has benefited from FSS expertise in handling restricted data and has shown ability to partner with it at least once already. • PETs are critical to public and policymaker trust that blended data, live-feed data, and other microdata handled by statistical agencies remain confidential and used only for statistical purposes.	100 days
B	***Make federal statistical agencies' data findable and AI ready***		
5	The administration should ensure that federal statistical agencies have the means to place permanent digital object identifiers (DOIs) on high-value federal statistical data products, documentation, and methodology and research papers.	• This should be a straightforward way to improve the public findability of federal statistical products. • It is consistent with the OPEN Government Data Act of 2007 and the White House AI Action Plan.[31] • It is consistent with FIPPs principles 2 (quality) and 6 (openness). • It also promotes cooperation with chief data officers (CDOs).	100 days
6	The administration should require and provide the means for high-value federal statistical data to be AI ready.	• This is consistent with the White House AI Action Plan,[26] in which NSDS is referenced. • It is consistent with FIPPs principles 2 (quality) and 6 (openness). • NSDS has an AI Data Readiness Transformation Tool that has been applied, tested, and used to produce sharable code. NSDS is preparing an API for this purpose. • It is a way to demonstrate early wins that underscore the need for and benefits of modernization. • AI-readiness requires datasets to be well organized and documented, which benefits agencies and their data users.	100 days

[30] See https://www.nsf.gov/focus-areas/artificial-intelligence/nairr.

[31] See https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Americas-AI-Action-Plan.pdf.

#	Recommended Actions	Rationale	Time
		• The FSS—through the FSS and the NSDS Demonstration Project—has called for AI-readiness tools, which are now currently in development. • To meet the data quality and openness requirements of federal statistical data (as noted in the FIPPs), making federal data AI ready will support downstream application of AI tools to identify and describe federal statistical data products accurately.	
C	***Address legal, financial, and technical barriers to methodological challenges to improve use of blended data for federal statistics***		
7	The administration should address barriers that TIP, NAIRR, NSDS, and ICSP identify to accelerating existing and new projects designed to increase FSS production of higher-frequency data, use of AI, and adoption of privacy-enhancing techniques (PETs).	• The NSDS/TIP and NSDS/NAIRR efforts are expected to uncover financial, legal, and technical barriers to such improvements in federal statistics as higher-frequency data. • Having high-level entities such as TIP and NAIRR to help address these issues should propel progress.	100 days

Enable a Well-Functioning Data-Sharing Infrastructure for Federal Statistics

The next set of recommendations, 8 through 13 in Table 6-3, gets at a bedrock necessity for improved federal statistics—namely, the need for seamless sharing of data from the private sector, state and local governments, and other federal agencies with federal statistical agencies to enhance the relevance, accuracy, timeliness, granularity, and efficiency of numerous statistical programs and products—most often through a blended data approach (CEP 2017:41–5; ACDEB 2022:41–5; National Academies 2023a:65–72; National Academies 2023b; National Academies 2024.). The FSS would build on its strong legal and historical foundation of data minimization, transparency, confidentiality, and exclusively statistical purposes to perform data linkages and generate improved statistics from the linked data, while keeping input datasets separate and appropriately protected to ensure confidentiality.[32]

The private sector can benefit from greatly reduced burden to fill out numerous statistical surveys if statistical agencies can develop robust systems for automating reporting of business data directly from corporate data systems and then reorganizing the company input as needed into usable statistical datasets[33] (Modernization documents 3 and 4). The statistical agencies can be more efficient and cost-effective, in turn, if there are standard procedures and costs for acquiring useful data generated by the private sector, such as price aggregators to use in a blended data approach to producing price indexes.

[32] If the United States had a more centralized statistical system, as in many other countries, data sharing would not be the issue that it is for the FSS. For example, Statistics Canada has authority to use administrative data for statistical purposes, which it does under a formal framework to ensure ethical use and transparency (Statistics Canada Policy on the Use of Administrative Data Obtained under the Statistics Act).

[33] These benefits were among those articulated in project meetings with federal statistical agencies in fall 2025.

With regard to state and local data, when federal funds contribute to program costs (e.g., for SNAP, Medicaid, unemployment insurance), then there should be a presumption that statistical programs could access relevant data items, such as benefits and household composition. In fact, legislation may likely be required to make such access possible, given states' long-standing differences in interpretation of their rights regarding these types of data. Ideally, there would be direct benefits to the states in terms of resources for technical assistance, standardization, and the like, in addition to the downstream benefits of data series from federal statistical agencies that are comparable and comprehensive across states.[34]

We understand that states (and other entities) may have concerns with sharing data with federal statistical agencies lest these data be misused for enforcement of immigration and voting policies. Nonetheless, Title III of the Evidence Act (CIPSEA) imposes stiff penalties on statistical agency staff and agents who release any individually identifiable information. Recommendation 14 (see Table 6-4 below) calls for legislation to further extend those penalties to a broader set of actors, which would make it unlawful for other federal agencies or their contractors to access individually identifiable information in the custody of a statistical agency, including data provided by the states, for enforcement or other actions affecting specific people or organizations. Standard MOUs between federal statistical agencies and states could reference that legislation and incorporate its provisions into the agreements for specific data sets from each state.

Finally, sharing of federal data from statistical and nonstatistical agencies with the FSS needs to be seamless, which may require legislation in some cases, in addition to issuance of the "presumption of access" regulation required by the 2018 Evidence Act (OMB 2015a, b; CEP 2017: chap. 2 ; U.S. Congress 2019, Title III 5529–36; ACDEB 2022:23-27.).

Table 6-3. Recommendations for an Interoperable System: Improve Secure Data Sharing

#	Recommended Actions	Rationale	Time
A	***Improve private-sector data sharing with federal statistical agencies for statistical purposes***		
8	The administration should develop a priority list of companies with which multiple statistical agencies will expand "live feed" data acquisition—along with a strategy for gaining company cooperation.	• This recommendation builds upon successful pilot projects conducted by the Census Bureau. • It provides benefits to all economic statistics programs and continued momentum to enable near-real-time economic data availability.	100 days
9	The administration should create a working group of agency general counsels to support any regulatory reviews needed to implement the private-sector live-feed pilots, including specific timetables for review completion.	• Making private-sector data more accessible to federal statistical agencies can reduce costs of federal data acquisitions and improve efficiency and data quality, ultimately with improvements to timeliness that benefit the private and public sector. The private sector also benefits from reduced burden of responding to multiple surveys. • Federal statistical agencies and private-sector data providers and users have indicated the challenges in achieving regulatory review and clearance to enable improvements.	100 days

[34] These benefits were among those articulated in project meetings with federal statistical agencies in fall 2025.

#	Recommended Actions	Rationale	Time
		• This approach builds "statistical and information policy/law" literacy at cabinet agencies, which has largely been lacking other than at Commerce and SSA.	
B	***Improve state data sharing with federal statistical agencies***		

10	The administration's agency regulatory reviews should identify legal and regulatory barriers to FSS access to data from federally funded state programs for privacy-protected statistical purposes only and develop and implement an action plan to eliminate or greatly reduce those barriers while retaining privacy protections.	• This recommendation advances a CEP recommendation that does not necessarily require legal action but does require the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA) in OMB to put some muscle into making it a reality.
		• Making state-held administrative data accessible for federal statistical purposes:
		  ○ improves public accountability for programs;
		  ○ likely reduces costs of federal data acquisitions; and
		  ○ improves data quality.
		• Currently, federal regulations define what states report to the federal government, which is often a subset of what is collected, and often do not clearly authorize access for statistical purposes. Current statistical agency access is onerous if not infeasible, as it requires customized state-by-state agreements, given state-specific interpretations of federal law and regulation and sometimes state law. Regulatory changes would be necessary to enable the access likely legally permitted under the Presumption of Access regulation (see (11) and (12)).
		• Addressing these changes as regulations come into OIRA for review is a logical and orderly way to accomplish the needed sharing of state data for privacy-protected federal statistics.
			100 days

11	Two necessary first steps in the action plan (see recommendation 10) are: 1. The administration should direct OIRA to issue a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) for the regulation required in the 2018 Evidence Act to make federal agency data accessible to statistical agencies by default ("presumption of access"—see recommendation 12). The NPRM should define "federal data" to include data held by states for federally funded programs. 2. The administration should develop a list of high-priority state datasets to inform the action plan to eliminate or greatly reduce barriers for FSS access	• The CEP found that some of the most-high-value datasets are federal program data held by states. As noted in recommendation 10, these data are governed by federal regulations, which generally do not contain clear means by which access for statistical purposes can occur. • Re-regulating to make this authorization explicit should eliminate much of the onerous state-by-state negotiations currently required. • With support from ICSP, OIRA can lead a federal effort to re-regulate to enable access (consistent with the Presumption of Access Regulation) and, if not feasible, identify the legal barriers that would need to be addressed.	100 days

#	Recommended Actions	Rationale	Time
	while retaining privacy protections (see recommendation 10).		
C	***Improve federal data sharing with federal statistical agencies***		
12	The administration should direct OIRA to issue Notices of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRMs) for two legally required data-sharing regulations in Title III of the 2018 Evidence Act: 1. Make federal agency data accessible to statistical agencies by default ("presumption of access") (as in recommendation 11); and 2. Expand access to confidential statistical agency data in secure environments. The administration should concurrently instruct OIRA to develop implementation guidance for the two regulations, including a common data-sharing agreement template, with a goal of the regulations becoming effective by the end of 2026 and the guidance by the end of 2027.	• These regulations were required by the Evidence Act, Title III. • NSDS has been working on a data-sharing template. • These regulations and the implementation guidance that would accompany them (including a data-sharing template) are essential to provide a legal and operational basis for statistical agencies accessing federal and state-held data efficiently and cost-effectively, including even data from other statistical agencies. • Their timely completion is also important for making it feasible to expand statistical agencies' data holdings that can be made available in secure environments for evidence-building and other important statistical uses. • These regulations are anticipated to conform and advance several FIPPs principles, including 1 (authority and collection minimization), 2 (quality), 3 (purpose specification), 4 (use limitation), 5 (security), 6 (openness), and 8 (accountability).	100 days
13	The administration should direct federal agencies identified as overseeing high priority data sets to develop regulatory and statutory changes to allow FSS access, agree on a common data-sharing agreement template, and submit those to the implementation task force within a specified timeframe. The implementation task force should work with relevant Congressional committees on needed legislation, including modifications to the US code.	• This recommendation directs federal agencies overseeing high-priority federally held data to address regulatory barriers or identify the legal changes needed. • These changes must conform with FIPPs guidance, particularly principles 3 (purpose specification), 4 (use limitation), and 5 (security). • Examples of high-priority federally held data are those protected by Titles 13 and 26. The CEP report also provides a list. • Some of the necessary authorization will be addressed in the Presumption Regulation (12), but not all. That regulation asks agencies to identify the laws that bar presumed access and subsequently asks agencies to work to remove these barriers. • Similarly, common data-sharing agreements can resolve some, but not all, barriers.	18 months

Enable Greater Accountability to Data Users and Providers

The final set of recommendations for achieving interoperability across the FSS (recommendations 14 through 20 in Table 6-4) will enable greater accountability to

stakeholders, which is essential to foster trust and enhance the relevance and usability of data products and services for policymakers and the public (HEW 1973: Principle 2; HEW 1977: chap. 15; U.S. Congress 2019: Title III; OMB 2024:§ 1321.7, § 1321.8 .). To foster trust, the FSS must strike an appropriate balance between confidentiality protection and widespread access to statistical data—a challenging proposition in the internet era. To maintain continued availability of public-use data, the FSS will need to be open to legal as well as technical means to counteract bad actors but not undercut data access by policymakers and the public. Another important area for the FSS to address is reduction of survey burden for households, businesses, and NGOs. Ensuring that statistical agency staff and leadership are appropriately protected from political interference is another key aspect of bolstering public trust so that data products have credibility with regard to accuracy and other features (National Academies 2025 Principle 4: 37-41.).

Recommendations for enhancing usability of data and data products include commissioning one or more outside organizations to review statistical agencies' websites, data access tools, documentation, etc., and recommend improvements to reduce the burden on users to find and access what they need (National Academies 2022: chap. 7). Agencies also need to expand their efforts to understand the breadth and depth of their user communities as part of determining how well they are serving all groups (e.g., expert users, novice users) and to build robust channels for outreach, feedback, and interactive dialogue on data needs and changes in statistical programs and products.

Table 6-4. Recommendations for an Interoperable System: Improve Accountability

#	Recommended Actions	Rationale	Time
A	***Safeguard trust***		
14	Congress should enact legislation to extend the current penalties on statistical agency staff to all federal staff, their agents (e.g., contractors), and members of the public who: (1) willfully reidentify individuals in public-use federal statistical data; or (2) gain unauthorized access to individually identifiable data. The legislation should take priority over other legislation on the matter (e.g., Title 13).	• There are stiff penalties for disclosure of non-public data by statistical agency staff, their contractors, and researchers who are granted access in secure sites to work with confidential data. • However, other federal agencies, their contractors, other entities, and other individuals do not face such penalties. • Penalties may discourage bad behavior by the public and may therefore help federal agencies with calculations of acceptable risk of what they release. • Importantly, the legislation would preclude data use agreements between enforcement agencies or their contractors and statistical agencies, which could improve trust. • Privacy-enhancing techniques are important to pursue but cannot be the sole answer to appropriate balancing of public use and privacy protection. PETs cannot guarantee confidentiality while still providing accurate data for the public good. • This recommendation is consistent with FIPPS 3 (purpose specification), 4 (use limitation), and 5 (security).	18 months

#	Recommended Actions	Rationale	Time
15	The administration should develop an action plan for statistical agencies to reduce respondent burden and periodically report on progress. (Burden reduction can be obtained by eliminating a survey, or, more likely, reducing survey content to the minimum needed for blending with administrative records and private-sector data.)	• *De minimis* data collection reduces the repeated collection of personal information. In doing so, it respects privacy. (An example is that people do not like reporting income amounts in a survey; a solution is to ask about income receipt to enable linkage with relevant administrative and private-sector records, as in the NEWS initiative.) • The recommendation is consistent with FIPPs principle 1 (collection minimization). • A description of progress in promoting privacy by leveraging blended data approaches demonstrates value. • Reducing respondent burden also promotes statistical efficiency.	100 days[35]
16	If the administration should implement the new OPM Schedule Policy/Career for senior federal positions, it should do so in such a way as to promote the objectivity and credibility of federal statistics, with no hint of political influence. Ideally, none of the current career positions at federal statistical agencies should be converted.	• By the provisions of the 2018 Evidence Act, federal statistical agencies are responsible for producing relevant, objective, and credible statistics in a manner that protects the confidentiality of data providers. • Objectivity and credibility include federal statistical production that is free from perceived or actual undue political influence. • Mechanisms exist through the PRA to ensure that statistical agency priorities for data collection are relevant to administration and congressional priorities. • Accordingly, there is no need for excessive political appointees or Schedule Policy/Career staff appointments to ensure conformance with an administration's agenda. • This recommendation is consistent with FIPPs 2 (quality). • Relatedly, noncareer appointees to important Schedule P/C infrastructure positions (e.g., in HR, contracts, legal counsel's office) should be made aware of the statistical integrity protections and resource needs of the federal statistical agencies in their purview.	180 days
B	***Improve usefulness***		
17	The administration should engage one or more well-recognized non-governmental organizations to: (1) identify improvements to federal statistical data product usefulness, including findability, transparency of documentation, acquisition, and standardization/ interoperability; and (2) deliver the findings and recommendations for an action	• At present, federal statistical agency websites, data access tools, documentation, and other features of their data dissemination programs differ widely among and within agencies. • A systematic comparative review (which could be carried out by more than one organization) with the results subject to public comment could provide useful input for upgrading and making more consistent the ability of statistical agency websites to serve a wide range of users and uses well. • This recommendation is consistent with FIPPs 2 (quality) and 6 (openness).	See note.[36]

[35] 100 days for the plan. Periodic reporting to continue.

[36] 30 days to engage evaluators; 180 days to complete the evaluation(s); 30 days for public comment (it is expected the evaluators would obtain wide input).

#	Recommended Actions	Rationale	Time
	plan. The administration should solicit public comments on the action plan.		
18	The administration should assess use of federal statistical agency products by the private sector, states, and other users. This assessment should include recommendations for areas of strength, growth, and sunsetting.	• It is a goal of good government to provide high-value services and reduce waste. • Although federal statistical agencies review their programs accordingly, input from a wider set of users and more timely data will help them make more informed budgetary decisions regarding programs. • The NSDS is preparing a data use platform that examines in real time use of federal statistical products by several different user communities. It makes that information available to the public and federal agencies. • This recommendation can deliver work already in progress and also support sustained effort. • This recommendation is consistent with FIPPs 1 (collection minimization), with a view to improving quality (FIPPs 2) and openness (FIPPs 6).	100 days
19	The administration should identify opportunities to engage the private sector when establishing and updating data standards most relevant to the private sector—both federal statistics used by the private sector and private-sector data that have value for FSS use.	• To make federal statistical products more useful to the private sector, federal agencies need to understand how the private sector collects and uses data and, therefore, the formats and periodicity that would be most useful. Agencies also need to understand how the private sector organizes its own data that are of potential value for FSS use. • By crafting these standards together, federal statistical data products could be more useful to the private sector, and response to federal data collection efforts could be more timely/more efficient. • Examples of existing such communities of practice include the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and the Jobs and Employment Data Exchange (JEDX).	100 days
20	The administration should propose and finalize rulemaking to update federal statistical policy to improve the usefulness of federal statistical data programs, products, access tools, websites, and documentation according to the input received in response to recommendations 17 through 19.	• This recommendation would implement improvements to usefulness, including those that resulted from recommendations 17 through 19—for example, standards for private-sector input data and output statistics; standards for documentation; standards for consistency of demographic and other variables common to multiple statistical data products. • Incorporating these updates into the relevant statistical policy directives and implementation guidance using the established process is efficient and transparent government.	180 days

Second Priority: Building Toward Unified Systems

Once strategies to achieve interoperability are fully under way, initial steps can be made toward the unified stage, where efficiencies are maximized and innovation becomes more agile. In a

functionally **unified system,** federal statistical agencies' operational systems are fully compatible and funded to allow planning of multiyear, system-wide access agreements, priorities, and investments. The functionally unified FSS can produce more innovative and relevant products. Smaller federal statistical agencies have as good methodological and data access tools as larger agencies.

The central focus of action, however, should remain on achieving interoperability until it has been determined that sufficient progress has been made to warrant a progression in focus to the attainment of a functionally unified system. The rationale is simple: systems cannot be unified (fully compatible) until they are sufficiently interoperable (reflecting standard definitions). The recommendations for the unified stage cover stepped-up coordination of statistical program planning and budgeting, incentives and capabilities to motivate innovation, and creation of an FSS-wide "brand" that connotes usefulness and trust to policymakers and the public (OMB 2015a; OMB 2024:§ 1321.4.).

Coordinate Statistical Program Planning and Budgeting

The first set of unified stage recommendations (21 through 26 in Table 6-5) concern statistical program planning and budgeting. Notably they address the need for streamlined and coordinated IT planning and budgeting under an FSS-wide chief information officer (CIO) who oversees shared IT services (Modernization documents 3, 4.). They also address the need for appropriations specifically for each statistical agency (rather than some agencies having some or all of their funds allocated from their parent agency's appropriation) and multiyear funding flexibility (ASA 2025b:57.). One-year funding with rigid dates for spending out appropriated funds is antithetical to the requirements for significant innovation.

Motivate Innovation

Improving statistical methods and adopting new technologies such as privacy-preserving computation and AI will be essential to modernization (ACDEB 2022:41–5; National Academies 2023a:78–84.). Key to successful and significant innovation is the recognition that it requires investment up front. The recommendations for motivating innovation (27 and 28 in Table 6-6) envision an FSS Innovation Fund to be allocated by the ICSP to further top priorities identified FSS-wide. Such priorities ideally involve more than one agency and creative use of multiple data sources. One way to reward agencies for adopting a collaborative innovation culture could be to reserve a portion of the FSS innovation fund for projects put forward by collaborating agencies.

Enhance Branding of Data Products and Producers

At present, with the exception of the Census Bureau and perhaps BLS and BEA, the federal statistical agencies are not well known beyond their own user communities. Particularly for the smaller agencies, this low profile hurts them during the congressional appropriations process and means that the public does not have a sense of the breadth and depth of value provided by the FSS. Recommendations 29 and 30 (Table 6-7) address the need for a widely recognized

"brand" for the statistical agencies. These recommendations go beyond the website branding requirements provided in the Trust Regulation (which should be implemented immediately) (OMB 2024:§ 1321.4) to provide common standards for the agencies to distinguish "gold standard" or "official" statistics from experimental or beta statistics as a guide to policymakers and the public.

Table 6-5. Recommendations for a Unified System: Coordinate Planning and Budgeting

#	Recommended Actions	Rationale	Time
A	***Enable streamlined IT management across federal statistical agencies***		
21	The administration should establish a Federal Statistical System chief information officer (CIO) with full authority under key federal IT laws, to oversee a shared IT service (see recommendation 22).	• Strong, system-wide, technical IT leadership is needed to support system-wide innovation and modernization. • Federal statistical information systems are essential means to obtain data and deliver and protect statistical products. • IT systems are outdated rapidly due to emerging technologies, and PETs are a dynamic area of research and development. A shared IT service could improve not only efficiency and relevance but also make it easier to maintain data confidentiality and statistical integrity FSS-wide. • To identify and act upon system-wide policy and budget priorities for a robust IT system requires leadership at a level recognizing the complexity—and opportunity—of the challenge. • This recommendation also supports recommendations 13 through 15 under III, Accountability, A, Safeguarding Trust.	100 days
22	The administration should create an FSS IT shared service (see recommendation 21). The FSS shared IT service would conform with federal statistical confidentiality requirements.	• The costs, efficiencies, and integrity required of a modern FSS IT system require a shared service to fund and implement system-wide priorities identified by the FSS CIO.	180 days
B	***Build budgeting agility***		
23	Congress should provide the FSS IT shared service with multiyear funding flexibility.	• To respond promptly and strategically to policy direction, innovation opportunities, and emerging threats, the FSS IT shared service must have multiyear funding flexibility. • Agencies must be able to take on complex multistage projects with some assurance that funds will be available for the stages that occur in later years.	180 days
24	Congress should establish line-item funding for each federal statistical agency—that is, adequate funding for each agency without having it depend on allocations from parent agency funds. Line-item funding should permit	• Federal statistical agencies must have line-item funding to respond promptly and strategically to policy direction, innovation opportunities, and emerging system-wide priorities and innovation opportunities. • Line-item funding should permit flexibility to federal statistical agencies across staff and program budgets to allow strategic response to emerging priorities.	180 days

#	Recommended Actions	Rationale	Time
	flexibility in spending across federal statistical system staffing and program budgets.		
25	Congress should provide multiyear funding flexibility for statistical agencies.	• Sustained progress in modernizing the federal statistical system and its products requires budgeting flexibility for federal statistical agencies to address emerging system-wide priorities and innovation opportunities. • Currently, very few federal statistical agencies have multiyear funding, which hampers their ability to promptly respond to administration priorities and implement multiyear strategic plans.	180 days
26	Congress should identify an appropriation mechanism for funding the Principal Federal Economic Indicators (PFEIs) and federal data programs with high interdependencies that reflects their necessity for the statistical system and national security. The administration should identify federal data programs with high interdependencies and establish operational guidelines and performance criteria for them that take into account their crucial role in an interoperable FSS.	• PFEI statistical products, such as GDP, Consumer Price Index (CPI), and inflation, are a matter of national security. • Improving interoperability will cause more interdependencies among federal data products. Operational decisions and performance criteria for highly interdependent programs (such as population estimates, the Current Population Survey, and the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages) should take into consideration impacts on downstream FSS uses. • An appropriations mechanism that reflects the importance of PFEIs and data programs with high interdependencies would provide greater visibility and stability for those programs and others that rely on them. • To pilot the unification of federal statistical agencies' budgets, start with unifying federal statistical products with similar regulatory requirements.	180 days

Table 6-6. Recommendations for a Unified System: Promote Innovation

	Recommended Actions	Rationale	Time
A	***Prioritize innovation***		
27	The administration should prepare a proposal for transparently managing a new FSS Innovation Fund.	• To date, the federal statistical system can innovate only incrementally without the sustained management and funding support needed to support system-wide innovation. • To identify and act upon system-wide policy and budget priorities for innovation requires a plain language plan for managing an FSS innovation fund.	60 days
28	Congress should establish and fund an FSS Innovation Fund. Congress should provide multiyear funding flexibility for the FSS	• The FSS Innovation Fund requires resources. • These resources should be managed in a way to advance system-wide goals and address system-wide opportunities and threats. • For greatest impact, priority should be given to funding	180 days

	Innovation Fund.	innovations that improve the ability of the system as whole to provide statistical products of best value. • Particular focus could be on funding privacy-enhancing techniques, which would support FIPPs 5 (security), 8 (accountability), 1 (collection minimization), 3 (purpose limitation), 4 (use limitation), and 6 (openness).	

Table 6-7. Recommendations for a Unified System: Enhance Branding

#	Recommended Actions	Rationale	Time
A	***Leverage branding system-wide***		
29	The administration should fully implement co-branding of federal statistical agency websites to also include the federal statistical system and extend co-branding to federal statistical products.	• As federal statistical agency operational systems become more interoperable, maintaining relationships between the public and particular federal statistical agency products will be important to preserve trust. • Co-branding is one way to do that and is referenced in the Trust Regulation. • This recommendation supports FIPPs 6 (openness).	100 days
30	The administration should identify and propose high-value data series that merit a "gold standard" or "official" designation and brand statistical data products accordingly.	• Innovation means that some statistical products may not meet the highest standards of rigor but could be useful to informed users and guide further development. ○ For example, BEA has satellite accounts, which supplement the national accounts, often provide more detail in particular areas, and may use experimental methods. Other national statistical offices also offer "beta" versions of statistical products in development to engage users and receive feedback. • The chief statistician's office has explored measures of statistical quality including a "gold standard." • Differentiating among products allows the system to innovate while maintaining trust in its most rigorous products. • This recommendation is consistent with FIPPs 2 (quality).	100 days

7: KEEPING ON TRACK

Assessing Progress to an Adaptive FSS

The roadmap and recommended actions presented above are intended to lead to the **adaptive stage,** in which an agile and resilient federal statistical system produces credible, trustworthy, and innovative federal statistics efficiently and can respond with agility to new data requirements. Federal statistical agencies in an adaptive FSS would all have highly automated, resilient, and agile processing and administrative systems, sufficiently standardized to operate, in effect, as an integrated, agile, and responsive entity. The FSS would routinely address established statistical product needs, anticipate emerging needs, and proactively incorporate new data sources to provide value for policymakers and the public.

There is much work to be done for the FSS to become a fully adaptive system, as described in the specific recommendations in Section 6. To keep on task toward this goal, progress must be assessed and shortcomings must be addressed promptly.

Accordingly, recommendation 2 in Table 6-1 above urges that the Congress, operating through the Joint Economic Committee and committees of jurisdiction, announce and hold a series of oversight hearings to encourage transparency by signaling support for FSS modernization and soliciting public input. Hearings should occur early in the modernization effort and each year thereafter to highlight successes and identify further additional challenges.

In its work, the Congress could leverage existing performance measurement conducted by OMB. Both the management side and the budget side of OMB could be engaged to inform a FSS system-wide approach to assessing performance. Additionally, the Trust Regulation requires performance criteria to be established by CIGIE (by December 2026) to inform subsequent IG audit reviews for statistical agencies and their parent agencies at least once every three years. This is an opportunity to examine and propose suitable performance criteria that adopt not only a statistical agency/parent agency dyad lens, but also an FSS system-wide lens. As we have shown throughout this report, performance of any single statistical agency cannot be well assessed–or planned–without taking into account the needs and opportunities of the system as a whole.

Crucially, recommendation 2 also urges Congress to task GAO with closely monitoring FSS modernization. The GAO should work with the implementation task force (see recommendation 1) and committees of jurisdiction to identify and draft legislation needed for modernization (see recommendation 10 in Table 6-3). GAO should solicit input from not only the task force, but also the public, policymakers, statistical agencies, data users, and advisory groups (including ICSP, subject matter advisers, methodology advisers, and data use advisors). With that input, GAO should issue reports that document successes and problems and suggest solutions.

In particular, GAO should assess whether the recommended actions in the roadmap have (a) been implemented and (b) yielded sufficient benefit to achieve the interoperable stage, or whether additional strategies/actions are necessary. GAO should also assess readiness to move to the unified stage and, ultimately, to the adaptive stage.

A Possible Need for Administrative Consolidation

Would consolidating the federal statistical agencies administratively (that is, beyond functionally) help or hinder the path of the FSS to the adaptive stage? The question is important because advancing to the adaptive stage will require much greater system-wide decision-making and planning. This issue is also not new. Partial or full consolidation of the FSS has been proposed many times in the past, back to at least 1903. Most recently the current administration has proposed to move BLS to the Commerce Department, as did the Obama and Biden administrations previously (Modernization document 1.).

Rather than administrative consolidation as a first step to coordinate the FSS, we recommend a major expansion in the authority and responsibilities of the ICSP and the chief statistician's office, which resides in OMB.[37] This expansion may prove sufficient. However, there are at least two reasons why this arrangement may not succeed: (1) the chief statistician and the ICSP may never gain the full authority and flexible resources needed, including subject-matter expertise, to achieve the level of coordination required; and/or (2) OMB could prioritize political or other objectives, undermining the process, integrity, or trust in the FSS.

In the case of failure to achieve the adaptive stage with these recommendations, some consolidation of agencies with the Office of the Chief Statistician is likely the best path forward. For that case, the team presents a full consolidation proposal that is described as Option 5 in Table A-1. This option creates a National Statistical Office (NSO) in order to maximize the potential benefits of collaboration, data sharing, accountability, and efficiency, as well as visibility of statistics, particularly if individual agencies were blended as needed. It also moves the FSS into its own cabinet-level department in order to protect data integrity. The chief statistician would have the ongoing authority and time to determine the best structure for the NSO, rather than having legislation impose a permanent structure immediately. Lines of authority and appropriations would be clear, facilitating blending agencies, setting priorities, achieving economies of scale and scope, coordinating operations and products, promoting trust, and ensuring uniform protections. Many fewer parties would be involved in interagency agreements, and statistical policies and priorities would be more evenly applied. The proposed structure is similar to how most developed countries' statistical apparatuses are arranged. In an era of staffing and budget cut proposals, this option would best allow the programs of the smaller agencies to continue to be viable (a concern noted in ACDEB 2022:18, 65.).

No previous consolidation proposals have been enacted, even though most other developed countries have a more centralized statistical system than the United States. The reasons for maintaining decentralization include the transition costs, reluctance to distance statistical agencies from data producers and users in current home departments, risks of empowering efforts to politicize the agencies, and uncertainty about whether consolidation is necessary or sufficient for modernization. Creating a new separate agency in an era of downsizing will be a heavy lift; the current administration, authorizing committees, appropriators, or parent departments may resist.

The project team recognizes that consolidation would require careful planning and implementation if the potential risks and drawbacks were not to overwhelm the potential benefits. Reorganizations are always disruptive, not only to agency staff and leadership but also to other entities, such as user groups, whose normal ways of interacting with statistical agencies would be interrupted to a greater or lesser extent. Moreover, organizational consolidation alone would not necessarily result in a mature FSS characterized by interoperability, unity, and

[37] For such purposes as managing the proposed FSS-wide implementation fund and setting FSS program priorities, it will likely be advisable to establish an ICSP executive committee to carry out these functions, given that the current ICSP is such a large body (30 members). The Evidence Act expanded the ICSP to include statistical officials in departments that do not house a principal federal statistical agency.

adaptability. In the worst cases, consolidation would simply house agencies in a single entity with each agency acting independently and even at cross-purposes, or consolidation might subordinate one or more agencies to an existing agency without carefully examining the pros and cons of such a move[38] (Modernization documents 2, 3.).

The ideal context for consolidation is when vision, standards, and interoperable data are aligned but cross-agency regulatory, legal, or appropriations barriers to further progress prove insurmountable. Then, consolidation may be necessary for improving coordination and planning—and most clearly beneficial. These considerations have fueled past efforts to promote consolidation of the Census Bureau, BLS, and BEA (Modernization document 1.).

This roadmap charges the administration and Congress with championing, overseeing, and implementing the steps to move the nation's statistical agencies to an effectively interoperable, functionally unified, and adaptive FSS. Our recommendations do not include structural consolidation. Yet, such consolidation cannot be taken off the table. The desired efficiencies and improvements in the FSS may not be achievable if the agencies remain in separate cabinet departments, where they are subject to inconsistent, uncoordinated administrative processes for MOUs, acquisitions, budgeting requests, etc. If so, we believe that organizational (administrative) consolidation is essential. The form of consolidation we recommend is described in Table A-1 (and Modernization document 1) as Option 5.

8: CONCLUSION

Our nation can have better data to drive our most important personal, business, and policy decisions. By harnessing Information Age data and technology, our FSS could provide us with very timely or on-demand access to very detailed information without compromising confidentiality.

How do we get there? The roadmap presented above provides a clear set of actionable recommendations for modernizing the FSS and the trustworthiness of its products in stages. Its success will require upfront and sustained commitment by the executive and legislative branches, and an active role by GAO in monitoring progress, including obtaining feedback from a wide range of stakeholders, including OMB. Furthermore, the commitment of statistical agency leaders and staff must be supported, as the 2018 Evidence Act requires, by their cabinet departments or agencies.

The rewards promise to be great, allowing our statistical agencies to:

- Tailor data products to user needs: in many instances requiring a "blended data" approach;[39]

[38] Also noted in project meetings with federal statistical agencies during Fall 2025.

[39] We credit Sallie Keller for the "statistical products first" concept, which has resonated with the federal statistical community.

- Work collaboratively with partners in business, state and local government, and academia to develop and implement state-of-the-art methods and processes to produce more timely, accurate, granular, and relevant statistics; and
- Provide opportunities for staff to grow and gain experience in multiple subject and methodological areas, equipping them to respond to emerging data needs.

Then, policymakers and the public will have every reason to trust and take pride in the world-class statistics the modernized, adaptive FSS provides for their needs.

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SOURCES CONSULTED

The following internal project materials and stakeholder consultations informed this report but are not cited as formal references. They are available at Modernizing the Federal Statistical System on the American Statistical Association web site. Note, Appendix 2 of this roadmap summarizes the purpose, approach, and emerging themes from each of these meetings.

Modernization document 1. *Background Document for the June 24 [2025] Federal Statistical System Modernization Meeting.* Washington, DC.

Modernization document 2. *Meeting 1 [June 24, 2025] Summary: Federal Statistical System Modernization Discussions.* Washington, DC.

Modernization document 3. *Meeting 2 [August 19, 2025] Summary: Federal Statistical System Modernization Discussions.* Washington, DC.

Modernization document 4. *Meeting 3 [October 21, 2025] Summary: Federal Statistical System Modernization Discussions.* Washington, DC.

APPENDIXES

Appendix 1: Organization of FSS by Congressional Appropriations Subcommittee

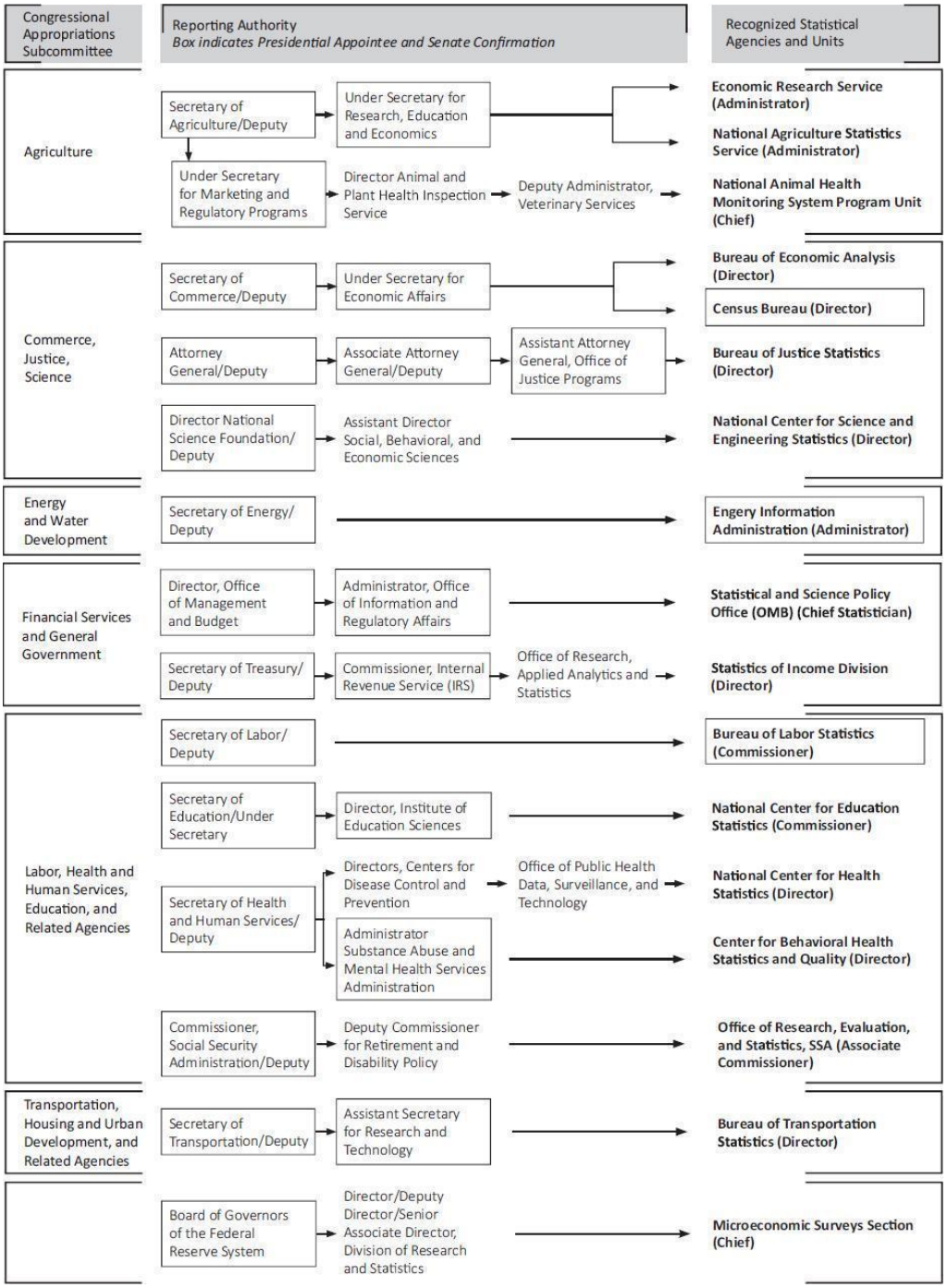
Appendix 2: FSS Modernization Project: Stakeholder Meetings and Emerging Themes

Appendix 3: Concise List of ASA Roadmap Recommendations

Appendix 4: From a Strong Core: Recommendations by Foundational Documents

Appendix 1: Organization of FSS by Congressional Appropriations Subcommittee

Figure A-1. Recognized Statistical Agencies or Units by Congressional Appropriations Committee and Parent Chief Financial Officer Act Agency (as of March 2025)



SOURCE: National Academies 2025.

Appendix 2: FSS Modernization Project: Stakeholder Meetings and Emerging Themes

Overview

The Federal Statistical System (FSS) Modernization Project, hosted by the American Statistical Association, convened a series of expert meetings in 2025 to develop actionable recommendations for strengthening and modernizing the U.S. federal statistical system in the current policy environment. The discussions aim to inform a strategy for communicating modernization priorities to policymakers and stakeholders while maintaining the credibility, independence, and usefulness of federal statistics.

Three meetings were held between June and October 2025, each with a distinct purpose and participant group. Together they explored: (1) structural reforms to the system, (2) the evolving needs of data users, and (3) strategies for advancing modernization recommendations and building support among decision makers.

This appendix summarizes the purpose, approach, and emerging themes from each meeting (see also “Sources Consulted” above for more information and meeting materials).

Meeting 1 – Structural Options for Modernizing the Federal Statistical System

Purpose

The first meeting, held June 24, 2025, explored whether structural reforms could help modernize the federal statistical system in the current policy environment. Participants—primarily experienced leaders and experts familiar with the federal statistical system—were asked to assess the desirability and feasibility of potential structural changes to address longstanding system challenges.

The goal was not to make final recommendations but to assess policy appetite for structural reform and identify promising directions for further discussion.

Approach

Participants received a background paper (Modernization document 1) in advance outlining key challenges facing the FSS and five illustrative structural reform options. See Table A-1. The structural options ranged from legislative reforms without organizational restructuring to full consolidation of statistical agencies.

The meeting operated under Chatham House rules to encourage open discussion. The discussion process included: small-group discussions of structural options and their advantages and disadvantages; plenary discussion of key insights; a ranking exercise to gauge preferences among the structural options; and follow-up breakout discussions to identify emerging themes and next steps.

Emerging Themes

1. Growing recognition that structural change is likely: Participants acknowledged that restructuring of federal statistical programs is already occurring indirectly through broader policy shifts. Many emphasized the need to guide these changes strategically to protect statistical quality and independence.

2. Preference for targeted consolidation with legislative reforms: The strongest support emerged for a hybrid model combining legislative reforms with consolidation of key economic statistical agencies (such as BEA, BLS, and Census). This approach was viewed as a feasible step toward modernization while avoiding disruption from full system consolidation.

3. Caution regarding full consolidation: While some participants saw long-term value in a fully consolidated statistical system, many questioned its feasibility in the current political environment and worried about implementation risks.

4. Importance of leadership and coordination: Participants emphasized the central role of strong system-wide leadership, particularly from the chief statistician, in coordinating agencies, promoting shared services, and advancing data-sharing.

5. Legislative and institutional barriers: Several barriers to structural change were identified:

- Limited legislative champions;
- Agency resistance to losing autonomy;
- Budget and oversight complexities;
- Outdated and incompatible IT infrastructures; and
- Expectations of short-term cost savings.

Participants stressed that modernization will require significant investment and clear policy authorization.

6. Need for a compelling value proposition: Successful structural reform will require clear communication of the benefits to different stakeholders—including policymakers, data providers, and data users. Cost savings alone will not justify reform; the value must be framed in terms of improved decision-making, innovation, and public value.

Meeting 2 – Data User Needs and the Future of Federal Statistics

Purpose

The second meeting, held August 19, 2025, shifted focus from institutional structure to data user needs. Participants included private-sector analysts, researchers, public-sector users, and others who rely on federal statistical products.

The objective was to identify how federal statistics are currently used, what attributes make them valuable, and what changes would be necessary for the system to meet future demands.

Approach

Participants were provided a discussion agenda and a preparatory thought exercise focusing on the data products they use most frequently.

The meeting included: panel presentations; breakout group discussions; interactive polling; and plenary discussion. The conversation was divided into two parts: how users currently use federal statistical products and the barriers they face; and how the federal statistical system could evolve to better meet future needs.

Emerging Themes

1. Federal statistics remain foundational to national decision-making: Participants emphasized that federal statistics underpin:

- business and investment decisions;
- public policy and budgeting;
- academic research; and
- public accountability and transparency.

The FSS was described as a "national source of truth" providing standardized, credible benchmarks for understanding economic and social conditions.

2. Core attributes of trusted statistical products: Users emphasized several essential characteristics of valuable federal statistics:

- objectivity;
- clear documentation and metadata;
- transparency about methods and limitations;
- accuracy and reliability;
- accessibility and usability; and
- ability to link datasets across sources.

These attributes form the basis of trust in federal statistical products.

3. Growing demand for integrated and user-centered data products: Participants argued that modern statistical systems must become more user-driven, offering such elements as:

- interoperable datasets;
- integrated administrative and private data;
- machine-readable formats and APIs;
- improved visualization tools; and
- greater geographic and demographic detail.

User-centered design was emphasized as a critical modernization principle.

4. Major barriers to modernization: Participants identified several obstacles limiting the usefulness of federal statistics:

- strict data-sharing rules;
- declining survey response rates;

- insufficient timeliness and frequency of releases;
- limited local-level detail;
- metadata inconsistencies;
- resource constraints; and
- declining public trust.

These challenges threaten the system's ability to provide relevant and credible information.

5. Importance of administrative and private-sector data integration: Participants widely supported supplementing surveys with administrative and private-sector data sources to address declining response rates and improve timeliness. Examples included payroll data, tax records, and commercial datasets.

However, participants stressed the need for strong governance frameworks to protect privacy and ensure transparency.

6. Sustaining trust while modernizing: Modernization must balance innovation with trust. Participants emphasized:

- transparent governance;
- clear communication of methods;
- privacy-preserving technologies; and
- strong oversight and guardrails against misuse.

Trust was viewed as essential to the long-term legitimacy of federal statistics.

Meeting 3 – Advancing Modernization Recommendations and Building Support

Purpose

The third meeting, held October 21, 2025, moved from diagnosis to strategy. Participants were selected from academia, industry, and public-sector data user communities with experience in statistical modernization efforts.

The meeting included the review of a set of modernization recommendations and also explored how structural changes—such as consolidation—might affect the implementation of these recommendations.

Approach

Participants were presented with an initial set of modernization recommendations and were asked to provide feedback on both the substance of the proposals and the best strategies for gaining support among policymakers and other stakeholders.

The meeting included: plenary presentations outlining the modernization vision and recommendations; breakout sessions organized around four strategic areas; a second breakout

session focused on engagement and messaging strategies; and the discussion was organized around four proposed modernization strategies.

Emerging Themes

1. Leveraging artificial intelligence: Participants supported using AI to modernize statistical production processes, particularly for:

- data cleaning;
- data integration;
- anomaly detection; and
- user engagement tools.

However, they emphasized that AI should augment—not replace—human expertise. Transparency, oversight, and workforce training were viewed as essential to responsible AI adoption.

2. Expanding higher-frequency statistics: Participants strongly supported expanding real-time or near-real-time statistics to improve policy responsiveness. Key elements included:

- partnerships with private companies to obtain “live feed” data;
- expanded use of administrative data; and
- AI-enabled analytics to process high-frequency datasets.

Trust and sustainability of public–private partnerships were considered essential to success.

3. Strengthening data-sharing infrastructure: Participants emphasized that improved data-sharing across agencies could dramatically increase the value of federal statistics. Priorities included:

- expanding interagency data-sharing;
- creating common legal frameworks and data-sharing agreements; and
- identifying high-value datasets for early integration.

Participants recommended demonstrating early successes to build momentum and support.

4. Ensuring sustainable progress: Participants highlighted the importance of institutional mechanisms that support long-term modernization, including:

- multiyear funding for statistical agencies;
- shared IT services across agencies;
- an innovation fund for statistical modernization; and
- stronger system-wide leadership and coordination.

Participants also emphasized the need for transparency and safeguards to maintain public trust.

5. Messaging and political strategy: Participants advised that successful modernization messaging should emphasize:

- economic value and efficiency;
- societal benefits;
- transparency and privacy protections; and
- alignment with existing policies such as the Evidence Act.

At the same time, they warned that structural consolidation could undermine trust if perceived as politicization or cost-cutting.

Cross-Cutting Themes Across the Three Meetings

Several themes emerged consistently across the meetings.

1. Modernization must balance innovation with trust: Participants consistently emphasized that modernization efforts must protect the credibility, objectivity, and privacy safeguards that underpin public trust in federal statistics. This has become more urgent in an era of fake news.

2. Integration and collaboration are central to modernization: Across discussions of structure, data products, and implementation strategies, participants stressed the importance of:

- cross-agency coordination;
- shared services;
- integration of administrative and private data; and
- partnerships across sectors.

3. Leadership and governance matter: Strengthening the role of the chief statistician and improving system-wide governance were repeatedly identified as key to modernization.

4. Resources and infrastructure are major constraints: Modernization requires sustained investments in:

- technology infrastructure;
- workforce capabilities;
- shared platforms; and
- long-term funding mechanisms.

5. Clear communication is essential: Participants emphasized the importance of communicating the value of federal statistics to policymakers, businesses, and the public. Demonstrating societal and economic benefits will be critical for gaining support.

Conclusion

The three meetings collectively provide a structured exploration of the modernization challenge facing the federal statistical system. Meeting 1 focused on structural reform options; Meeting 2 examined user needs and data product modernization; and Meeting 3 explored implementation strategies and engagement approaches.

Together, the discussions highlight a shared vision for a modern federal statistical system that is more integrated, timely, and innovative while remaining transparent, independent, and trusted. Achieving this vision will require coordinated leadership, sustained investment, responsible use of new technologies, and effective engagement with policymakers and the public.

Table A-1. Options for a Modern Federal Statistical System

Options	Major elements modified	Number of recognized statistical agencies (RSAs)
1: Harmonize the existing federal statistical system	Retains current structure plus: • CSOTUS strengthened • Barriers to sharing data and services reduced • Integrity protections reinforced and harmonized	13 RSAs
2: Harmonize with limited consolidation	Option 1 plus: • BLS moves to Commerce • BEA, Census, and BLS are integrated and rebranded (here, as "BCB") to take best advantage of strengths	Consolidated Commerce RSA ("BCB") + 10 separate RSAs
3: Harmonize with limited consolidation and deputy chief statisticians	Option 2 plus: • Dual-hatted deputy chief statisticians (residing in home statistical agencies and also reporting to CSOTUS) are appointed to aid coordination	Consolidated Commerce RSA ("BCB") + 10 separate RSAs
4: Harmonize with partially consolidated National Statistical Office and deputy chief statisticians	Option 3 plus: • New national statistical office integrating BCB and 3–5 other statistical agencies (e.g., SOI, NCSES, and NCES) and existing shared services (SAP, NSDS, and FSRDCs) • New office provides services to all statistical agencies	Consolidated (partial) national statistical office + 5–7 separate RSAs
5: Harmonize with fully consolidated National Statistical Office led by empowered CSOTUS and deputy chief statisticians	Option 4 plus: • Integrates all statistical agencies into the national statistical office • Headed by CSOTUS (external to OMB) with deputy chief statisticians • Single appropriator • Advised by National Statistical Board and Partnership Council • Takes on key OMB PRA authorities (e.g., statistical classifications) • Provides services to statistical programs throughout the government	1 RSA

Three recognized statistical units are not considered in these options. Two (in SAMHSA and the USDA Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service) are effectively defunct. The third unit is in the Federal Reserve.

Appendix 3: From a Strong Core: Recommendations by Foundational Documents

The FSS Roadmap recommendations were not developed in isolation; they built upon several foundational documents. For example, the need for modernization of the FSS was articulated in detail by the CEP report. The Evidence Act responded to this need by establishing a legal baseline. The ACDEB Year 2 Report documented persistent implementation gaps to be addressed.

The FSS Roadmap recommendations account for prior work to modernize the system by operationalizing modernization through sequencing, accountability, and investment. Table A-2 demonstrates this alignment of roadmap recommendations with similar recommendations or principles in foundational documents.[40] Short names of roadmap recommendations are used for brevity.

Table A-2. Mapping Roadmap Recommendations to Selected Foundational Documents

#	Roadmap Recommendation Short Name	Personal Privacy	FIPPs	CEP	Evidence Act	ACDEB 2-Year	Trust Regulation	Alignment Summary
1	FSS Modernization Task Force	Chap. 12–3 governance of federal data systems	Principle 8: Accountability	Chap. 15 pp. 101–104	Title I Evidence Officers pp. 5503–5512	pp. 4–7	Produce relevant statistical information	Centralized modernization governance across the federal statistical system
2	Executive and Congressional Oversight	Chap. 12 transparency in government data	Principle 6: Openness	Chap. 15 p. 103	Title I oversight authorities pp. 5503–5512	pp. 39–42	Conduct objective statistical activities; audit using	Strengthens external oversight and accountability for federal statistics

[40] *Fair Information Practice Principles (FIPPs) (1973); Personal Privacy in an Information Society (HEW 1977); The Promise of Evidence-Based Policymaking (CEP Report, 2017); Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act (Evidence Act, 2018); Advisory Committee on Data for Evidence Building (ACDEB) Year 2 Report (2022); and Fundamental Responsibilities of Recognized Statistical Agencies and Units (OMB Final Rule, 2024).*

#	Roadmap Recommendation Short Name	Personal Privacy	FIPPs	CEP	Evidence Act	ACDEB 2-Year	Trust Regulation	Alignment Summary
							performance criteria	
3	TIP–NSDS Innovation Partnership	Chap. 13 data infrastructure modernization	Principle 5: Security	Chap. 14 pp. 80–85	Title III secure data access pp. 5529–5536	pp. 41–42	Improve statistical methods	Implements CEP vision of a national secure data service innovation hub
4	NAIRR–NSDS PET Development	Chap. 13 privacy protection mechanisms	Principle 5: Security	Chap. 13 pp. 60–63	CIPSEA modernization Title III pp. 5529–5536	p. 84	Protect confidentiality	Advances privacy-enhancing technologies and secure analysis methods
5	DOIs for Statistical Products	Chap. 12 information dissemination norms	Principle 6: Openness	Chap. 14 p. 83	Title II Open Data pp. 5515–5519[41]	p. 84	Disseminate statistical information	Improves discoverability and citation of official statistics
6	AI-Ready Statistical Data	Chap. 13 data processing modernization	Principle 2: Quality	Chap. 14 pp. 83–85	Title II interoperability provisions pp. 5515–5519	p. 84	Conduct credible statistical activities	Prepares statistical data for AI and machine-readable use
7	Remove Innovation Barriers	Chap. 12 administrative flexibility for data use	Principle 8: Accountability	Chap. 14 pp. 86–93	Title III rulemaking authority pp. 5529–5536	pp. 41–42	Improve statistical methods	Removes regulatory and financial barriers to innovation

[41] Also see M-25-05-Phase-2-Implementation-of-the-Foundations-for-Evidence-Based-Policymaking-Act-of-2018-Open-Government-Data-Access-and-Management-Guidance.pdf.

#	Roadmap Recommendation Short Name	Personal Privacy	FIPPs	CEP	Evidence Act	ACDEB 2-Year	Trust Regulation	Alignment Summary
8	Private-Sector Data Feeds	Chap. 13 integration of non-government data	Principle 3: Purpose Specification	Chap. 12 pp. 24–39	Title II interoperability pp. 5515–5519[36]	p. 41	Produce timely statistics	Expands statistical inputs beyond traditional surveys
9	Legal Review for Data Partnerships	Chap. 13 oversight of data agreements	Principle 8: Accountability	Chap. 14 pp. 80–86	Title III regulatory authority pp. 5529–5536	p. 41	Facilitate statistical work	Creates streamlined legal pathway for data-sharing pilots
10	State Administrative Data Access	Chap. 13 administrative records integration	Principle 3: Purpose Limitation	Chap. 12 Rec.2-6 p. 24	Title III Presumption of Access pp. 5529–5536	p. 39	Produce relevant statistics	Enables expanded use of state administrative datasets
11	Implement Presumption of Access Rule	Chap. 13 administrative data policy	Principle 1: Authority and Collection Limitation	Chap. 12 pp. 24–39	Title III Sec.3582–3583 pp. 5529–5536	p. 41	Facilitate recognized statistical agencies and unit responsibilities	Completes Evidence Act data-sharing framework
12	Finalize Data-Sharing Regulations	Chap. 13 governance of statistical data	Principle 8: Accountability	Chap. 12–3 pp. 24–63	Title III CIPSEA regulations pp. 5529–5536	p. 41	Protect confidentiality	Completes unfinished Evidence Act regulatory implementation
13	Remove Data-Sharing Barriers	Chap. 12 national data coordination	Principle 8: Accountability	Chap. 12 pp. 24–39	Title III secure access pp. 5529–5536	p. 41	Facilitate statistical activities	Expands cross-agency administrative data access

#	Roadmap Recommendation Short Name	Personal Privacy	FIPPs	CEP	Evidence Act	ACDEB 2-Year	Trust Regulation	Alignment Summary
14	Strengthen Confidentiality Penalties	Chap. 13 privacy enforcement mechanisms	Principle 5: Security	Chap. 13 pp. 60–63	CIPSEA confidentiality pp. 5529–5536	p. 84	Protect trust of respondents	Enhances deterrence against misuse of confidential data
15	Reduce Respondent Burden	Chap. 13 reduce redundant data collection	Principle 1: Collection Limitation	Chap. 12 pp. 24–39	Title II evidence building pp. 5515–5519	p. 41	Improve statistical methods	Uses administrative data to reduce survey burden
16	Protect Statistical Objectivity	Chap. 12 institutional safeguards for statistics	Principle 2: Quality	Chap. 13 pp. 60–63	Title III statistical agency protections pp. 5529–5536	pp. 101–105	Conduct objective statistical activities	Ensures credibility and objectivity of official statistics
17	External Data Product Review	Chap. 12 evaluation of government information	Principle 6: Openness	Chap. 14 dissemination p. 83	Title II Open Data pp. 5515–5519	p. 84	Disseminate statistical information	Improves usability and quality of statistical outputs
18	Assess Data User Demand	Chap. 12 information needs assessment	Principle 3: Purpose Specification	Chap. 15 learning agendas pp. 101–103	Title I Sec.312 pp. 5508–5511	p. 40	Produce relevant statistics	Aligns statistical production with policy and research demand
19	Private-Sector Standards Collaboration	Chap. 13 interoperability standards	Principle 6: Openness	Chap. 12 interoperability pp. 24–39	Title II data standards pp. 5515–5519[35]	p. 41	Improve statistical methods	Improves standardization across data sources
20	Update Statistical Policy Directives	Chap. 12 governance of federal information systems	Principle 8: Accountability	Chap. 15 pp. 103–104	Title I policy authority pp. 5503–5512	pp. 39–42	Facilitate statistical work	Modernizes federal statistical policy framework

#	Roadmap Recommendation Short Name	Personal Privacy	FIPPs	CEP	Evidence Act	ACDEB 2-Year	Trust Regulation	Alignment Summary
21	Shared IT Infrastructure	Chap. 13 secure information infrastructure	Principle 5: Security	Chap. 14 pp. 80–85	Title III secure infrastructure pp. 5529–5536	p. 41	Protect confidentiality	Supports cross-agency data-sharing and analysis
22	Coordinate FSS Budget Planning	Chap. 12 coordination of federal data programs	Principle 8: Accountability	Chap. 15 pp. 101–105	Title I OMB coordination authority pp. 5503–5512	p. 101	Facilitate statistical activities	Aligns budgeting with statistical system modernization
23	Streamline IT Governance	Chap. 13 system governance and oversight	Principle 5: Security	Chap. 14 pp. 80–93	Title III infrastructure provisions pp. 5529–5536	p. 41	Protect confidentiality	Improves coordination of statistical IT systems
24	Unified Strategic Planning	Chap. 12 long-term planning for data systems	Principle 2: Purpose Specification	Chap. 15 learning agendas pp. 101–104	Title I Sec.312 pp. 5508–5511	p. 40	Produce relevant statistics	Aligns planning across the statistical system
25	Multiyear Funding Flexibility	Chap. 12 funding stability for information systems	Principle 8: Accountability	Chap. 15 p. 104	Evidence Act authorization pp. 5511–5512	pp. 3–6	Facilitate statistical activities	Addresses modernization funding constraints
26	PFEI Economic Indicators Funding	Chap. 12 protection of key national indicators	Principle 2: Quality	Chap. 15 economic statistics discussion	Evidence Act authority pp. 5511–5512	NA	Produce timely statistics	Protects production of key national economic indicators

#	Roadmap Recommendation Short Name	Personal Privacy	FIPPs	CEP	Evidence Act	ACDEB 2-Year	Trust Regulation	Alignment Summary
27	Create FSS Innovation Fund	Chap. 13 investment in statistical innovation	Principle 8: Accountability	Chap. 14 pp. 80–85	Title I coordination authority pp. 5503–5512	p. 41	Improve statistical methods	Creates funding mechanism for statistical innovation
28	Fund FSS Innovation Initiatives	Chap. 13 innovation in statistical methods	Principle 8: Accountability	Chap. 14–5 modernization pp. 80–105	Title I authority pp. 5503–5512	p. 41	Improve statistical methods	Sustains innovation projects across agencies
29	FSS Brand and Product Identity	Chap. 12 public communication of official statistics	Principle 6: Transparency	Chap. 14 dissemination discussion	Title II Open Data pp. 5515–5519[36]	p. 39	Disseminate statistical information	Strengthens public trust in federal statistics
30	Gold-Standard Statistical Designation	Chap. 13 credibility of official statistics	Principle 2: Quality	Chap. 13 statistical quality pp. 60–63	Title III statistical integrity pp. 5529–5536	p. 84	Conduct credible statistical activities	Differentiates official high-quality federal statistics